

### Kuwaitis postpone pro-democracy talks

CAIRO (R) — Kuwaiti activists have postponed a conference planned for Thursday in London at which they planned to demand democracy in their country. Ali Al Bidah, head of the eight-man organising committee, told Reuters Wednesday that they wanted to give Kuwaitis who stayed in the country while it was held by Iraq and resisted the Iraqi occupation a chance to attend. They also wanted to give the ruling Sabah family more time to consider forming a unity government and recalling parliament, which the emir disbanded in 1986. "The conference will include those in Kuwait who led the resistance. We really want them to lead the discussions," Mr. Bidah said by telephone from London. Mr. Bidah said he planned to ask the Kuwaiti government to let the conference be held in Kuwait. If it refused, it would be held in London soon after the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan in mid-April.

# Jordan Times

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### Thousands of Sudanese children die annually

KHARTOUM (AP) — Tens of thousands of Sudanese children die every year from child-killing diseases despite a recent immunisation campaign, a Health Ministry report published Wednesday said. The report, published in the state-owned English language weekly New Horizon, said as many as one million children in Sudan are at risk of dying from diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, measles and tuberculosis. At least 1.2 million cases and 50,000 deaths are reported annually from the six diseases which could be prevented by vaccines, the report said. The author of the report, Suzan Wesley, attributed the high rate of child mortality to "primitive birth practices and use of unsterilised tools. Sometimes women put ashes, mostly contaminated, on the wound of the umbilical cord in help the wound dry quickly." The report said 71 per cent of children in northern Sudan have been immunised against all diseases since Jan. 1990, when an intensive campaign was launched. In the south however, the number rose only to 14.7 per cent due to drought and the civil war. Only the town of Juba, the capital of the southern state of Equatoria, had a high rate of 80 per cent.

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### Iraq introduces new coins

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, its economy battered by the Gulf war, has introduced new coins carrying the legend: "Victory is ours." The new high-denomination coinage was announced in two presidential decrees published in Baghdad newspapers on Wednesday. No explanation for the move was given. The five-dinar and 10-dinar coins are the first to exceed the nine-dinar metal piece.

### Kuwait to give \$900m to Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Kuwait will grant Turkey \$900 million in aid to help offset its losses from joining the U.N. trade embargo against Iraq, the Anatolian news agency reported Wednesday quoting the Turkish ambassador to Kuwait. The grant follows a \$300 million aid from Kuwait last September.

### Mine injures eight French soldiers

PARIS (R) — Eight French soldiers were hurt, three seriously, when a mine exploded in the southern Iraqi desert Tuesday, the army information office said. The blast occurred during a physical training exercise by members of France's 12,000-strong Daguet division, the office said in a statement.

### Sharon resumes post

TEL AVIV (AP) — Hardline housing minister Ariel Sharon agreed Wednesday to resume chairmanship of a special cabinet committee that oversees the resettlement of Soviet immigrants. Mr. Sharon resigned in anger earlier this week but agreed to retake the post after an appeal from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Israel Radio said. In stepping down, he accused the government of mishandling the flood of Soviet immigration.

### Iraqi ambassador to Spain seeking asylum

MADRID (AP) — The Iraqi ambassador has asked for political asylum in Spain, the Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. Over the weekend, Ambassador Tawfiq Ismail turned over weapons to police and burned documents in the garden of his Madrid embassy before requesting asylum and going into hiding under police protection, the daily ABC reported Tuesday. A Foreign Ministry spokesman confirmed the request but said the process of determining whether it would be granted would be "relatively long." He would not comment on the reports the ambassador handed over weapons or that Mr. Tawfiq Ismail's wife, Mouzra Hassan Mahmoud Al Tai, and four children ages 20, 18, 13 and 11, were also included in the asylum request. The embassy was unable or unwilling to provide any information on the ambassador's whereabouts.

### Gulf states discuss post-war security

NICOSIA (R) — Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'id of Oman and ministers from the five other Gulf Arab states on Wednesday discussed security in their region following the end of the Gulf war, Oman's news agency reported. "The session reviewed the outcome of meetings, consultations and talks concerning a new security system stemming from the nations of the region with the aim of achieving security and stability there," the agency said, without giving details. The agency said the one-day meeting was held in Oman's port city of Salalah.

### Kuwait hopes to start dousing fires

AHMADI, Kuwait (R) — Kuwait, its skies darkened by smoke from hundreds of blazing oil wells, said Wednesday it hoped to begin the long battle to extinguish the fires by the weekend. "We hope to start on Friday, Saturday or Sunday depending on the arrival of the necessary equipment," Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) executive Ahmad Murad told journalists.

## King: Jordan will not be PLO substitute

HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN said in an interview published Wednesday Jordan would never agree to stand in for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in peace talks with Israel. "Jordan has a very important part in any Arab-Israeli peace process," King Hussein told the New York Times. "But I'm saying at the same time that Jordan should not be, cannot be, will not be a substitute for the Palestinians themselves as the major aggrieved party of the Arab side in a process that leads to peace."

"If it is the choice of the Palestinians at some time in the future to ask Jordan to join them," the King added, "then they would certainly have the position of prominence in any process that seeks a comprehensive peace to deal with the Palestinian-Israeli problem."

Asked who was authorised to speak for, and should represent, the Palestinians, the King replied: "The Palestine Liberation Organisation is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

Commenting on peace efforts,

the King said the time ahead would be one of "dialogue and soul-searching," an occasion for "creative solutions." He said that after the Gulf war there was a "window of opportunity" that would probably last only a short time.

In the interview, half of which was devoted to Jordan's stance in the Gulf war and half to prospects for peace in its wake, the King said that despite accusing the American-led coalition of trying to destroy Iraq in a speech he gave in early February after the war was well under way, Jordan had remained neutral during the conflict and had never abandoned its principled stand of searching for a peaceful resolution of the problem between Iraq and Kuwait. "We did not take sides; I took the side of peace," the King said.

The King said that his speech, delivered after considerable destruction had occurred inside Iraq, "reflected my deep concern about stopping the killing of the Iraqi people." Moreover, he added, it was "addressed to the Arab and Muslim world" and represented an appeal to them to stop the destruction.

The King also said that Jordan had abided by the United Nations embargo on Iraq. Photographs of Jordanian arms and ammunition crates taken at Iraqi posts by allied soldiers were of ammunition that had been shipped through Saudi Arabia in 1982 during the Iran-Iraq war, the King said. Jordan had not provided such weapons or ammunition to Iraq for years, he said.

He refused to "apologise" to Saudi Arabia for Jordan's stance during the war, as Prince Baodur, Riyadh's ambassador to Washington, has demanded. "If apologies are demanded, they might be demanded equally strongly by us, if not more," the King said.

But signalling his desire to improve relations with the Gulf states, he added, "Time will show them that we were not against them, that they were very much in error in their attitudes towards this country and its leadership. I am confident that the misunderstandings between us can be rectified in the time ahead." Above all, the King stressed, he considered that the war was a chapter closed and that it was essential now to move on.



The King said he had not spoken or seen President Saddam Hussein for weeks.

Turning to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's peace mission, the King declined to express disappointment that Mr. Baker chose not to come to Amman on his tour. "That was the secretary's choice," he said. "If he didn't come at this point, we can't do much about it." Rather, the King said, he felt confident that the United States and Jordan would soon stop "signaling and hooting at each other like ships across a channel in a fog."

He confirmed that he sent a letter to President Bush after the Gulf war. But he declined to comment on its contents.

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## Crown Prince welcomes U.S. emphasis on 242 and 338

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan welcomes recent statements by the U.S. administration about solving the Middle East conflict on the basis of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 and hopes that the international legitimacy will be respected and that the U.N. will be given an active role to deal with the whole Middle East problem, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Tuesday.

The Crown Prince was speaking in three different television interviews conducted by the NHK, ITN and the Christian Science television networks.

Prince Hassan welcomed a visit to Jordan by a special envoy of the U.N. secretary general for Middle Eastern affairs.

Referring to calls by European nations for convening an international conference to solve the Palestine problem, Prince Hassan said: "I agree fully with the views expressed by European visitors that such conference needs extensive preparation and cannot be excluded. This preparation has to take place with the participation of all parties, primarily the Palestinians."

Commenting on criticism levelled against Jordan for the Jordanian people's sentiments expressed during the Gulf war the Prince said: "We have a democratic process in this country and everything is out in the open. Participation from the extreme right, the centre and the left is expressed in the Jordanian newspapers, and

consequently criticism of the United States appears politically in Jordan. However, Jordan is clearly not anti-American, but Jordan was anti-war as we believe that this war could have been avoided by political means and to continue to say that the United States have been disappointed with Jordan's position on the Gulf crisis only invites us to say that Jordan was also disappointed as we were not given the possibility of avoiding the war through political means.

"But if we are to live in the past there can be no dynamic addressing of the pressing problems of the present and the future and I think that as the U.S. thinks that

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## Jordan criticises American piecemeal approach to peace

### Deputies divided over Bush statement

By Nermeen Murad  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Wednesday strongly criticised the new U.S. approach to tackling the Palestinian problem in the aftermath of the Gulf war, saying the rejection of the principle of holding an international conference and attempts to replace such forum with bilateral contacts and disengaging the Palestinian problem from the wider Arab-Israeli conflict and not dealing with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) directly are very regrettable.

"To our extreme regret we see the U.S. still rejecting the principle of a peace conference and looking for alternative solutions including bilateral talks between concerned parties, disengaging the Arab-Israeli conflict from a



Taher Al Masri

solution to the Palestine issue, and it still refuses to deal with the PLO," Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri said in a statement he read at a regular session of the Lower House of Parliament.

While underlining Jordan's continued role in any political and diplomatic initiatives in the region Mr. Masri also expressed Jordan's disappointment over the

absence of joint Arab efforts in the post-Gulf crisis developments saying that most initiatives are "those dictated to us from outside the Arab World and what is proposed to us and others in the region regarding our problems comes from the foreigners."

Although Mr. Masri described as "an important development" U.S. President George Bush's address to the American Congress in which he explicitly called for a solution based on United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338 or what was termed as the territory for peace formula, he nevertheless pointed that the statement failed to define the mechanism through which the two resolutions could be implemented. Mr. Masri reiterated Jordan's commitment to an international peace

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## Baker in Damascus; Syria wants pressure on Israel

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker brought his Middle East peace mission to Gulf war partner Syria Wednesday.

Damascus said it wanted Washington to adopt a tougher line with Israel now that the war was over.

As Mr. Baker arrived from a two-day visit to Israel, officials and newspapers said Syria would urge the United States to press Israel to abide by U.N. Security Council resolutions calling for an international peace conference and an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

"Countries which are serious about finding a just peace should reconsider their position and develop their diplomacy into a more firm action," the official newspaper Al Thawra said in a commentary.

"Statements and wishes are not enough to force Israel to comply with the international will," it said. "There should be practical measures, the least of which should be a boycott of Israel and a threat to expel her from international organisations."

Mr. Baker is looking for the opening that would get Syria and the Palestinians talking to Israel. Mr. Baker also is likely to look for word on U.S. hostages held in Lebanon. According to some reports, they have been moved from Beirut to the Bekaa Valley.

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad has improved ties with the United States by supporting the war against Iraq and volunteering to contribute 30,000 to 30,000 troops to a permanent security force for the Gulf region.

Mr. Baker would like the Syrian leader to show interest in negotiations with Israel. A starting point could be talks to demilitarise the Golan Heights.

The Baker was met on arrival by Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharara.

He was also to have talks with President Assad.

Mr. Baker's talks with Israeli leaders and Palestinian officials produced no breakthrough.

Mr. Sharara and Italian Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis agreed in Damascus Tuesday that no double standard should be used in dealing with the conflict.

Radio and newspaper reports from Israel said Mr. Baker had dropped a regional peace conference between Israel and its Arab

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## Jordan following up on Jordanians in Kuwait

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has received no official confirmation of media reports of mistreatment of Jordanians and Palestinians in Kuwait but has, however, taken measures to contain the problem if it exists, Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri told Parliament Wednesday.

Replying to deputies' questions over the credibility of such reports, Mr. Masri said: "Jordan has no official information on these incidents, especially that it has no official representation in Kuwait and no direct contact."

But, he said, His Majesty King Hussein has already met with the ambassadors of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to discuss the situation of Jordanians in Kuwait and their safety.

"We have also contacted embassies whose countries are represented in Kuwait and their response was that they would not accept such incidents if they were taking place and that they would follow up on the reports," Mr. Masri explained.

The International Red Cross has been contacted by Jordan "and they expressed concern over the issue and have sent urgent messages to it," he said.

"We have heard reports quoting Kuwaitis saying that the status of Jordanians and Palestinians in Kuwait would not change, but that there were individual incidents during the chaos period that followed the war which had to be dealt with," Mr. Masri added.

The foreign minister pledged to continue working on the issue and expressed hope that contact with Kuwait would be resumed soon to enable Jordan to "undertake practical steps to protect Jordanians and Palestinians as the situation requires."

## Iraqi army seen gaining upper hand against revolt

Combined agency dispatches

FIGHTING BETWEEN Iraq's crack army units and rebels in southern Iraq was reportedly continuing Wednesday but all indications were that the government was gaining the upper hand.

The only source for the reports of fighting was Iraqi opposition groups, which concluded a three-day meeting in Beirut with a call for unity among themselves, and Iran's official media.

American sources in Washington, quoting intelligence reports, said the army was gaining the upper hand in the fighting and the government appeared firmly in control of most of the areas of the country.

Iraq's army units waged fierce battles with Kurdish guerrillas in northern Iraq, shelled rebel hold-

outs in the south and killed anti-government protesters in Baghdad, the opposition said.

Iran's official media said the boom of artillery and the roar of tanks blasting rebel positions in Basra was heard Wednesday morning in the nearby Iranian city of Khorramshahr.

Tehran Radio reported many people were killed in sections of Baghdad in clashes between protesters and government forces that lasted until 0000 (0900 GMT) Wednesday.

Kurdish rebels claimed they shot down four Iraqi helicopters in the north, that guerrillas surrounded by loyalists held on to parts of the vital oil centre city of Kirkuk and that fighting raged near Khanaqin, 135 kilometres northeast of Baghdad.

Rebel claims could not be independently verified.

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## Abu Sharif denies PLO is offering major concessions

### Abu Sharif's initial statement met with mixed feelings here

By Nermeen Murad  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Wednesday denied reports that it was willing to accept a Palestinian state comprising something less than the complete West Bank and Gaza Strip and drop its demand to negotiate with Israel on an equal footing.

Bassam Abu Sharif, chief political adviser to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, told Jordan Radio that an earlier statement attributed to him by Britain's Sky News was "absolutely not true and a groundless report."

Mr. Abu Sharif reiterated his organisation's support for United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which include a land-for-peace agreement as the

INITIAL Jordanian reaction to Wednesday morning reports of the PLO dropping its demand to be treated as an equal partner in negotiations with the Israelis and accepting something less than the complete occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip for a Palestinian state was a mixture of disbelief and pragmatism.

Apart from the fact that no-one believed that the political advisor to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat would forego the Palestinian people's rights to all of their occupied territories outside the framework of negotiations, the Jordanians noted that the relevant U.N. resolutions never called on Palestinians to take such steps even to appease the United States and Israel.

Jordanian sources said Mr. Abu Sharif's proposals as quoted from Sky channel, were beyond what was acceptable to all groups

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## Allies occupy 15% of Iraq

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Defence Secretary Dick Cheney said Wednesday that allied troops occupy about 15 per cent of Iraq and will continue to do so until a formal ceasefire is worked out.

"We don't have any designs on Iraqi territory, but we are not eager to withdraw our forces from there until the situation stabilises more and it's clear that Iraq is going to comply with all the relevant U.N. resolutions," Mr. Cheney told reporters after addressing Republican representatives in private.

Mr. Cheney said it appears Iraq intends to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions, "but that is the absolute minimum that we have to have. They did return our prisoners... and that was a very important first step."

Mr. Cheney said the return of remaining U.S. troops from the Gulf depends on how soon the allies can withdraw their forces from Iraq.

"We still occupy about 15 per

cent of Iraq and we will continue to do so until a formal ceasefire is worked out and everything is agreed to on the diplomatic side," he said.

Mr. Cheney called the onerous within Iraq significant but said it was somewhat disorganised.

"We think Iraq would be much better off and better able to recover from the war if they had other leadership than what they have today," Mr. Cheney said. "But the Iraqi people really are the ones who have to decide who's governing Iraq."

The Iranian government, which suspects Washington wants to see a pro-American government in power in Iraq, has stressed that the Iraqi people must decide their own fate without foreign intervention.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), quoted Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani as saying that "the forces inside Iraq should decide their own fate free from any foreign intervention."

He told visiting Canadian For-

ign Minister Joe Clark that the situation in Iraq was "alarming."

Iran has denied any involvement in the Iraqi revolt and his ruling Baath Party, but clearly sided with the rebels last week when it called on President Saddam to "step down."

In a meeting with Greek Foreign Minister Antonis Samaras, Mr. Rafsanjani said the situation in Iraq was "very bad," and appealed to Greece and other European countries to "alleviate" the pains of the Iraqi people.

He blamed their "suffering" on "global arrogance," an Iranian catch phrase for the United States.

Remains returned

A Red Cross aircraft carrying the remains of 14 allied soldiers killed in the Gulf war arrived in Saudi Arabia from Baghdad Wednesday, the U.S. military command announced.

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## Moscow contacts Arabs over security plan

MOSCOW (Agencies) — President Mikhail Gorbachev recently sent messages to Arab leaders outlining Soviet views on security in the Gulf and soliciting their views, a government spokesman said Wednesday.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin told the messages went to "a wide range of Arab states," but he would not list them or say whether Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was among them.

He would not divulge the contents of the message, but said a fuller government statement would be made soon.

"We, as many other countries, are working actively now on trying to find approaches to creating a reliable security structure in the 'Persian' Gulf and to resolving the Middle East problem," Mr. Churkin told a news briefing.

"Recently, President Gorbachev and the Soviet leadership sent messages to leaders of a broad range of Arab countries where they expressed some of our thoughts on those matters and solicited, of course, their views," he said.

The Soviet Union was Iraq's main weapons supplier before the invasion of Kuwait, but it sup-

ported all United Nations Security Council resolutions and sanctions aimed at dislodging Iraqi troops.

Mr. Gorbachev attempted to broker a peace settlement, but failed to win the support of the U.S.-led military alliance.

Mr. Churkin said co-acts through diplomatic channels to the government of Iraq were continuing.

"We, as many other countries, are working actively to create a reliable security structure in the Middle East," he later told reporters.

Mr. Churkin said the Soviet

proposals would be a central topic in talks, beginning on Thursday, with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who wraps up a Middle East mission with a stopover in Moscow.

Mr. Baker arrived in Damascus on Wednesday from talks in Israel.

In Moscow, Mr. Baker will also try to remove final hitches in a strategic arms treaty, paving the way for a superpower summit.

TASS quoted Mr. Gorbachev's spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko as saying the Soviet Union would

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## Iraqi unrest, allied stand may delay Gulf ceasefire

RIYADH (R) — Unrest in Iraq and allied demands that Iraq must comply with United Nations resolutions may delay the signing of a final Gulf war ceasefire by several weeks, Western diplomats said on Wednesday.

"I think a ceasefire might take some time," one diplomat said. "But we are talking about weeks rather than months."

Another Gulf-based European diplomat said the current stalemate "could drag on for some time while political and diplomatic decisions are taken."

Their assessment means that U.S. and French troops may remain in southern Iraq, where they occupied a strip of territory in a lightning ground strike last month, until the final ceasefire is signed.

An uneasy peace has reigned in the Gulf region since a U.S.-led coalition halted attacks on Feb. 28 after the Iraqi army withdrew from Kuwait. But no formal ceasefire was signed.

After agreeing peace terms with Iraqi generals earlier this month, allied commander General Norman Schwarzkopf said the coalition would pull out of southern Iraq as soon as a definitive ceasefire was signed but not before.

Western diplomats said the United Nations may begin discussing a ceasefire next week but

that various allied concerns and anti-government unrest in Iraq could delay a final agreement.

However, the diplomats said the allies did not intend to prolong the occupation of southern Iraq longer than necessary and the U.S. military was keen to pull out as soon as possible.

Kurds in the north and Shi'ite Muslim groups in the south have risen up against the Iraqi government after the Gulf war and rebels have claimed control of several provincial towns.

"The unrest in Iraq may prevent the Iraqis from complying with Resolution 686," one diplomat said, referring to a U.N. Security Council resolution imposing conditions on Iraq for a ceasefire.

The allies have been pleased with Iraq's cooperation since the war ended, it has promptly freed prisoners of war and revealed the location of mines.

Iraq has also promised to comply with Resolution 686, but the allies still want firm agreements on a variety of issues, the diplomats said.

They want a mechanism for dealing with Iraqi reparations to Kuwait, repatriation of stolen property and an agreement defining the border between Kuwait and Iraq, never clearly marked, a Riyadh-based Western diplomat said.

This was necessary "if only to decide where the coalition forces withdraw to," he said.

He said there may be a need for a separate written agreement between the allies and Iraq in addition to a U.N.-sponsored ceasefire.

The diplomat said unrest in Iraq could delay a ceasefire by, for example, hindering the return of thousands of Kuwaitis abducted during the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

The allies have made their return a condition for a ceasefire. "If the Iraqi government is not in full control, the government may not be in a position to let these people go," he said. They may not be able to go through some turbulent areas, he said.

There are already indications that problems inside Iraq are slowing the return home of 60,000 Iraqi prisoners of war captured by the allies.

Repatriation of the prisoners was due to start this week but was postponed due to "transport and transport safety problems," International Red Cross officials said, without giving details.

Another Gulf-based Western diplomat suggested the allies were awaiting the outcome of the power struggle in Iraq before signing a ceasefire. "No one can believe a pledge given by Iraq at the moment," he said.

## Iraq says rebellion doomed to failure

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq said Wednesday that "traitors" engaged in a rebellion against Saddam Hussein were doomed to failure and accused the United States of seeking to fragment Iraq.

The government newspaper Al Jumhuriya, referring directly to a two-week-old uprising in Iraq's Kurdish north and Shi'ite south, warned: "Iraq is not an easy prey for the masters of evil and ambition."

It described opposition groups fighting to oust President Saddam as "traitors and agents whose identities and evil aims are known."

Iraq had faced many previous attempts to overthrow the government and "all were doomed to failure and reaped nothing but real desperation."

It went on: "Those desperately trying to work in this direction will not be in a better position than those who preceded them."

The Defence Ministry newspaper Al Qadisiyah said Iraq was facing "the gravest conspiracy in its contemporary history" and that the United States was continuing "its dirty conspiracy to follow the footsteps of British colonialism during the occupation of Iraq."

Iraqis accuse Britain of imposing a policy of "divide and rule" during its 16-year mandatory rule of the country after World War I. Iraq's population of 16 million is divided into ethnic and reli-

gious groups of non-Arah Kurds, Sunni Muslims, Shi'ite Muslims and other minorities, including Christians and Jews.

Al Qadisiyah said the United States, Israel and their allies were pinning hope on the success of the rebellion, but "their bet was ridiculous."

The ruling Baath Party daily Al Thawra criticised U.S. Foreign Secretary James Baker's visit to the region, describing it as "an episode which continues the previous episodes of conspiracy against the Arab cause."

It said: "Baker's visit is not the last ring in the chain, because Washington's large scheme to liquidate Arab struggle necessitated continued visits by U.S. officials to implement the plan and assure U.S. hegemony over the region's political, economic, and military affairs."

It also lashed out at pro-Western Arab leaders, as well as Arab Americans whom it said "have positively responded to all (U.S. President George) Bush's orders and to what he had planned for the future of the region."

This was an apparent reference to calls by many Iraqis living abroad for President Saddam to step down.

"Baker's visit proves once again that the Arab traitors had linked their will to the U.S. demands," the paper said.

Mr. Baker arrived in Syria Wednesday after visiting Israel, Egypt, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

## Hostage release 'unlikely'

DAMASCUS (AP) — Fresh efforts by the United States and Britain to free their hostages in Lebanon through Syria and Iran are not likely to be fruitful, according to Western diplomats.

"There are no indications that there will be an early release of the hostages," said one, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"Of course, there are always surprises," he added. "But I don't think it's the hostage season right now."

A visit by an Iranian delegation, including Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, to Damascus last Thursday touched off speculation that Iran and Syria were working to secure the release of the Western captives.

Speculation intensified when the Iranian met leaders of the Shi'ite Muslim Hizbollah, the fundamentalist movement that is believed to be the parent group of the extremist factions holding most of the 13 missing men.

An Iranian embassy source stressed that the meeting was "routine."

The Hizbollah delegation included Hussein Musawi, reputed mentor of the Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine which holds two American educators.

Iran and Syria have been instrumental in securing the release of several hostages in recent years. Iran has close ties with Hizbollah. Syria, Iran's main Arab ally, has 40,000 troops in Lebanon and is the main power broker there.

The last hostage freed was an Irishman Brian Keenan on Aug. 24, six Americans, four Britons, two Germans and an Italian remain missing.

British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg, who arrived in Damascus late Tuesday, said he will raise the issue of the hostages during his meetings with Syrian officials "because, of course, the Syrians have good contacts with the Iranians."

"The Syrians have been very helpful in the matter of the hostages," said Mr. Hogg.

"They've pressed upon the Iranians how important it is that the hostages should be released and that our relations with Iran cannot be improved unless they are released."



TO GET TO IRAQ: Jordanians line up outside the Iraqi embassy in Amman to obtain entry visa to Iraq. Under new regulations introduced this week Jordanians have to secure prior visas on their

passports instead of an easily obtained entry permission to Iraq (Photo by Youssef Al 'Allam)

## Syria frees 570 mostly Palestinian prisoners

SIDON (AP) — More than 500 activists loyal to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat have been released from Syrian jails in a move that could help patch up Syrian-PLO relations, a PLO spokesman said Wednesday.

The 570 former prisoners, mostly Palestinians and a few Lebanese, were released Tuesday morning and bused later in the day from Syria to the Bekka Valley town of Bar Elias in east Lebanon, said PLO representative Zeid Wehbe.

He called the release a "positive initiative" and said he hoped it would improve the long-strained relations between Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's government and Mr. Arafat.

A Syrian military official with the Syrian observers force in Sidon, speaking on condition of

anonymity, confirmed the release and said other prisoners would be freed later. He did not elaborate.

The detention of more than 2,000 Palestinians had been the main stumbling block for a thaw in PLO-Syrian relations. Most were captured in the immediate aftermath of Mr. Arafat's expulsion from Damascus in June 1983 at the peak of his feud with Mr. Assad.

Others were seized in Lebanon, where Syria is the main power broker with 40,000 troops deployed across the country.

The Syrian-PLO feud was triggered by Mr. Assad's support of mutineers who tried to unseat Mr. Arafat after the flight of the guerrillas from their Lebanon strongholds in the face of an Israeli invasion in 1982. Mr. Arafat also has accused the Syrian president of trying to control the

Palestinian decision making process.

Mr. Wehbe said the 570 prisoners freed Tuesday were arrested by Syrian troops during fighting between the Syrian-backed Amal militia and the PLO in the Beirut Palestinian refugee camps between May 1985 and April 1987.

Among those released was the former political representative of Mr. Arafat's mainline Fatah guerrilla faction, a man who is known only as Abu Al Fatah. Mr. Wehbe said. He was arrested at a Syrian army checkpoint at the Khaleel junction south of Beirut in 1985.

PLO fighters in the South Lebanese refugee camp of 'Ain El Hilweh, on Sidon's southeastern outskirts, fired their automatic rifles in the air in jubilation as most of the former prisoners ar-

rived at the shantytown.

Mr. Wehbe said the other detainees returned to their respective refugee camps in Beirut and in north, east and South Lebanon.

In 1988, Mr. Arafat visited Damascus for a memorial for his slain aide, Khalil Wazir, co-founder of the guerrilla movement. Mr. Wazir was killed by Israeli agents in Tunis in April that year, and was buried in Syria.

Mr. Arafat met Mr. Assad for five hours, and again at Arab summit conferences in 1988 and 1989. But PLO officials complained that relations could not be normalised until all the prisoners have been freed, including Mr. Arafat's office manager, Muhammad Al Ameri, who was jailed in July 1983 after Mr. Arafat's departure from Syria.

"Israel was among the countries which asked the coalition to fully implement the U.N. resolutions (on Kuwait). This principle has to be applied in the other direction. The authority of the United Nations must be worthwhile also for them," he said.

Italy participated in the coalition against Iraq.

Mr. De Michelis said there is an agreement among the United States, the EC and Arab countries that an international peace conference should be convened "at the proper moment."

"The proper conditions have been partially created by the (Gulf) crisis, by the behaviour of the United Nations during these seven months. But other conditions must be created. This is up to us. This is up to the action of the coalition," he said.

"This visit is to say the Italian commitment and engagement which correspond to the European commitment for acting in this direction," he added.

He said Palestinians must be represented at any peace conference on the region and that the delegates must be chosen by the people themselves.

The minister said he does not expect the Israeli position to change overnight but he was adamant that the Israelis must show flexibility.

"If we are able to maintain the cohesion of the coalition, Israel must accept the new reality of the situation," he said.

Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordóñez Wednesday urged Israel to take advantage of a "better mood" in the Middle East and start a peace dialogue with Palestinians and the Arab states.

Mr. Fernandez Ordóñez spoke on Israel Radio shortly after meeting with Prime Minister Shamir.

## De Michelis: Israel must accept realities

CAIRO (AP) — Italian Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis expressed optimism Tuesday over chances of a Mideast peace settlement despite Israel's refusal to exchange land for peace.

"There is strong disagreement between the European Community (EC) position and the Israeli position. But we consider this as a first position. Our aim is to find ways utilising the cohesion of the international community to exert political pressure to bring Israel to accept the process," he said.

"I don't want to underestimate the difficulties but we can be rationally optimistic," he added.

Mr. De Michelis held the news conference after meeting President Hosni Mubarak. He is on the last leg of a Middle East tour during which he visited Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon and Syria.

The Italian minister spoke as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker met with Israeli officials and Palestinian leaders in an effort to find ways to end the conflict between their two people.

Israel has said it wanted to revive a plan for elections in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The ballot would choose negotiating representatives for talks on limited autonomy for the Palestinians living in the occupied territories.

Mr. De Michelis, who recently visited Israel, urged the Jewish state and the international community to pursue the implementation of all United Nations Security Council resolutions related to the Palestinian problem just as they did in the Kuwait-Iraq conflict.

"We have to act utilising only one standard with respect to all problems... we have to avoid adopting a double standard," he said.

He was referring mainly to U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 which call on Israel to withdraw from territory occupied in the 1967 war in exchange for secure borders.

"Israel was among the countries which asked the coalition to fully implement the U.N. resolutions (on Kuwait). This principle has to be applied in the other direction. The authority of the United Nations must be worthwhile also for them," he said.

Italy participated in the coalition against Iraq.

Mr. De Michelis said there is an agreement among the United States, the EC and Arab countries that an international peace conference should be convened "at the proper moment."

"The proper conditions have been partially created by the (Gulf) crisis, by the behaviour of the United Nations during these seven months. But other conditions must be created. This is up to us. This is up to the action of the coalition," he said.

"This visit is to say the Italian commitment and engagement which correspond to the Euro-

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## Stolen computer contained secret Gulf war plan

LONDON (AP) — A military computer, stolen in December and later returned, contained the most closely guarded secrets of the allied campaign in the Gulf war, the Times reported Wednesday.

A spokesman at the Ministry of Defence refused to say what was in the lap top computer, stolen Dec. 17 from the staff car of the head of the Royal Air Force.

The Times reported the computer held details of the deception plan devised by General Norman Schwarzkopf, the U.S. commander of Operation Desert Storm, that convinced the Iraqis the

allies would launch an amphibious landing on Kuwait's east coast.

The newspaper said very few people knew about the plan and quoted Brigadier Christopher Hammerbeck as saying the "plan was frightfully secret. I wasn't allowed to bring my staff in the know."

The plan was at risk for a few weeks because of the theft of the computer, which was returned three weeks later, the Times said. The Ministry of Defence spokesman said the computer was returned anonymously but refused to say when.

### PRAYER TIMES

04:27 ..... Fajr  
05:44 ..... (Sunrise) Duha  
11:45 ..... Dhur  
15:08 ..... Asr  
17:46 ..... Maghreb  
19:03 ..... Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terresanta Church Tel. 622366  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541  
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628343  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

### Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751  
Armenian International Church Tel. 827981, 685326  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be relatively cold and partly cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain. Winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min/Max. temp.  
Amman ..... 5 / 15  
Aqaba ..... 12 / 25

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts ..... 4 / 17  
Jordan Valley ..... 11 / 21

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 15, Aqaba 26. Humidity readings: Amman 67 per cent, Aqaba 24 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:  
Dr. Kayed Halayeq ..... 793522  
Dr. Saleh Zayed ..... 790677  
Dr. Sahal Tannous ..... 898903  
Dr. Hisham Kanaan ..... 790286  
Firas pharmacy ..... 661912

Ferdous pharmacy ..... 778356  
Al Aswad pharmacy ..... 637055  
Nairouki pharmacy ..... 626672  
Al Salem pharmacy ..... 636730  
Yacoub pharmacy ..... 644945  
Shamsani pharmacy ..... 637660

URBID:  
Dr. Shihda Al Zagh ..... (—)  
Al Sharas pharmacy ..... (275825)

ZARQA:  
Dr. Saleh Safarini ..... (—)  
Khalifah pharmacy ..... 985417

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 661111

### Civil Defence Immediate

Rescue ..... 630341  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199  
Rescue Police ..... 192, 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade ..... 891228  
Blood Bank ..... 775121  
Highway Police ..... 845402  
Traffic Police ..... 894300  
Public Security Department ..... 630321  
Hotel Complaints ..... 602800  
Price Complaints ..... 661176  
Complaints ..... 897467  
Amman Municipality ..... 787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 010230  
Central Amman Telephone

### Repairs

Abdullah Telephone Repairs ..... 623101  
Jordan Television ..... 773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
Water Authority ..... 690108  
Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615  
Electric Power ..... 636381  
Company ..... 08-53200  
RJ Flight Information ..... 08-53200  
Queen Alia Int. Airport ..... 08-53200

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
Hussein Medical Centre ..... 813813/32  
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. .... 644291/6  
Akhleh Maternity, J. Amn. .... 642441/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642363  
Mallat, J. Amman ..... 636140

### Palestine, Shamsani

Shamsani Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 849845  
Al-Mustashir Hospital ..... 672279  
The Islamic, Abdali ..... 666127/37  
Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 6641646  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen ..... 777101/3  
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh ..... 775111/26  
Army, Marata ..... 891611/25  
Queen Alia Hospital ..... 6024050  
Amal Hospital ..... 674155

ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital ..... (09)991071  
Bin Sina Hospital ..... (09)986732

BEERUT:  
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)272273  
Bin Al Nafes Hospital ..... (02)247100  
AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital ..... (05)314111

### MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg.  
Banana ..... 500 / 450

### Banana (Mukammal) ..... 450 / 400

Beans ..... 750 / 650  
Cabbage ..... 220 / 180  
Carrot ..... 180 / 120  
Cauliflower ..... 180 / 120  
Cucumbers (large) ..... 200 / 150  
Cucumbers (small) ..... 300 / 200  
Dates ..... 500 / 400  
Eggplant ..... 240 / 180  
Garlic ..... 950 / 800  
Grapefruit ..... 250 / 200  
Lemon ..... 280 / 250  
Lettuce (per one) ..... 100 / 150  
Marrow (large) ..... 200 / 150  
Marrow (small) ..... 350 / 300  
Onion (dry) ..... 280 / 220  
Onion (green) ..... 160 / 120  
Orange ..... 600 / 500  
Pepper (hot) ..... 260 / 220  
Pepper (sweet) ..... 250 / 200  
Potato ..... 250 / 200  
Radish ..... 120 / 80  
Sage ..... 400 / 300  
Spinach ..... 120 / 70  
Tomatoes ..... 350 / 280

لانا من اللى



## Business closure hour restrictions scrapped

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government has scrapped regulations introduced last October requiring stores, restaurants and other public and commercial places to close at fixed hours in the evening. A statement by the Cabinet said that as of Saturday, March 16, these measures will no more be applied. It is hoped that the scrapping of the measures would help the commercial sector of Jordan to revive its activities and that members of the public will benefit from the cancellation, said the statement.

The Cabinet had decided that stores close at 7 p.m. and that street lighting be switched off at 5 a.m. while the government departments had a two-day weekend so as to cut down on fuel consumption.

Later the government scrapped the two-day weekend and extended the closure time for stores until 8:30 p.m. to allow the public to do shopping in the evening.

Street lighting was also cut in half and central heating in government offices was reduced by 25 per cent, also to help reduce fuel consumption.

Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary General Asem Ghosheh said then that the decision to reduce energy consumption at government offices, streets and public squares was bound to save JD 1 million annually.

As the time approaches for the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, columnists in the Arabic press have been urging the government to scrap measures taken over the past months to save energy, now that the Gulf war is over and in view of the fact that citizens tend to do shopping in the evening during Ramadan.

Last month the government introduced a measure by which private cars were allowed to run on alternate days only, depending on the even and odd numbers on their licence plates. Columnists and editorialists discussed the issue and have been calling on the government to terminate this measure in view of the public's increased need for means of transportation during Ramadan.

The government introduced the measures during the Gulf crisis and the subsequent Gulf war which deprived the Kingdom of its Iraqi oil supplies forcing it to turn to other sources from Syria and Yemen.

The government, late last month, took delivery of an oil tanker with more than 90,000 tonnes of crude oil from Yemen and announced that Syria started supplying the country with gasoline and other products under an agreement reached between Damascus and Amman in February.

## Japanese NGO donates relief aid for refugees

AMMAN (J.T.) — A seven-member group representing the Shokon Voluntary Organisation in Japan Wednesday met with Salameh Hammad, head of the government appointed Evacuees Welfare Committee, and discussed aid for the evacuees coming into Jordan from the Gulf.

The group, whose members arrived here Tuesday evening to study the evacuees' question with the Jordanian government, was briefed by Mr. Hammad on his committee's relief services offered to the evacuees who fled the Gulf region since the outbreak of the crisis last August.

Nearly 800,000 foreign evacuees passed through Jordan on their way home and the Jordanian government had provided help to the evacuees through the various international organisations operating in Jordan, including the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) which has arranged for the repatriation of most of the foreign evacuees.

The Japanese group earlier visited the IOM office here to learn about its activities.

A spokesman for the group, which came from Cairo, told the Jordan Times that the group lead-

er, Mr. Nao, handed Mr. Hammad \$10,000, 1,200 blankets and an unspecified amount of medicine for the benefit of the evacuees.

He said that his team belonged to the Tokyo-based Shokon non-governmental organisation which groups 200 youths, oriented towards safeguarding the cultural heritage of Japan, but also trying to help other nations through donations collected in Japan for the benefit of persons escaping disaster areas.

"This is the first time that our organisation arranged for such assistance, but it is hoped that further aid will be forthcoming," said the spokesman.

He said that his organisation might be directing its attention towards raising funds to help the Jordanian government cover the cost of caring for the evacuees and transporting them from Iraq and Kuwait to Jordan before their repatriation.

Mr. Nao thanked Jordanian government and Hammad's committee for their humanitarian services to the evacuees during the Gulf crisis. Mr. Nao and his group are due to leave for Cairo Friday on their way back to Tokyo.

## Churches to send relief aid to Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Middle East Council of Churches announced Wednesday that they are sending four plane-loads of food supplies and medicine to Iraq and said that JD 10,000 worth of water purification equipment has already reached Baghdad.

A spokesman for the Middle East Council of Churches said that all the shipments are being channelled through the Iraqi National Red Crescent Society. For its part, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said that its fourth relief convoy for Iraq would leave Amman on Saturday.

The shipment of 100 tonnes of fuel, 200 tonnes of wheat flour, 60 tonnes of lentils, 25 tonnes of medicine and one camp module,

transferred from Syria, will travel to Baghdad. These, it said, will be carried by a convoy of 30 trucks. The convoy is part of the ongoing efforts to get essential public services running, at least partially, before temperatures begin to rise in Iraq.

Relief organisations have expressed fears of outbreaks of epidemics in the coming spring and summer.

According to the ICRC statement, the shipments to Iraq are being channelled through the Jordan National Red Crescent Society. The announcements from the Middle East Council of Churches and the ICRC coincided with the arrival in Iraq of a convoy of trucks carrying 50 tonnes of food supplies donated by people in the Madaba district.

## UNRWA receives \$1m from Austria

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has received a \$1 million donation from the government of Austria to help it cover the cost of educating expatriate Palestinian children at UNRWA schools in Jordan.

A statement here said that \$633,500 would be spent in the form of salaries for teachers employed by UNRWA which will be absorbing up to 2,500 of these children in its schools in Jordan.

Jordan witnessed a large influx of returning Jordanians and Palestinians from the Gulf, in the wake of the Gulf crisis, and the Ministry of Education announced that nearly 50,000 expatriate children had enrolled at government, private and UNRWA schools operating in the Kingdom.

The sum covers the salaries of 60 teachers, this year, and part of the cost of books and educational material for the students.

The statement said that the rest of the donation would be used to cover the cost of building 18 school rooms at three UNRWA schools in the Amman and Zarqa regions to absorb the additional number of students.

Meanwhile, the Italian embassy here announced Wednesday that Rome had granted Jordan 1,813.55 tonnes of rice which have arrived at Aqaba.

The statement said that the food aid was aimed at helping offset part of the consequences of the Gulf crisis on the Jordanian economy.

The statement said that the shipment of rice, which arrived at Aqaba on March 10, was delivered to the Ministry of Supply.

## RSS to help build private university

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Scientific Society (RSS) Wednesday signed an agreement to help construct a new private university at Shafa Badran near Amman.

The new university, to be known as the Applied Science University (ASU), will be the sixth university in the country after the four government universities and the Amman University College west of here, which opened its doors recently.

Under the agreement with the university, RSS will provide services to help in the management and follow up of construction work.

In the first stage of the project two buildings of 12,000 square metres in area will be set up as part of the university compound and the RSS will cooperate with the construction firm undertaking the project to help install the necessary equipment and scientific apparatus.

The new university had earlier contracted a local engineering consultancy firm to draw up the designs for the whole project and two local firms have already embarked on the initial ground work.

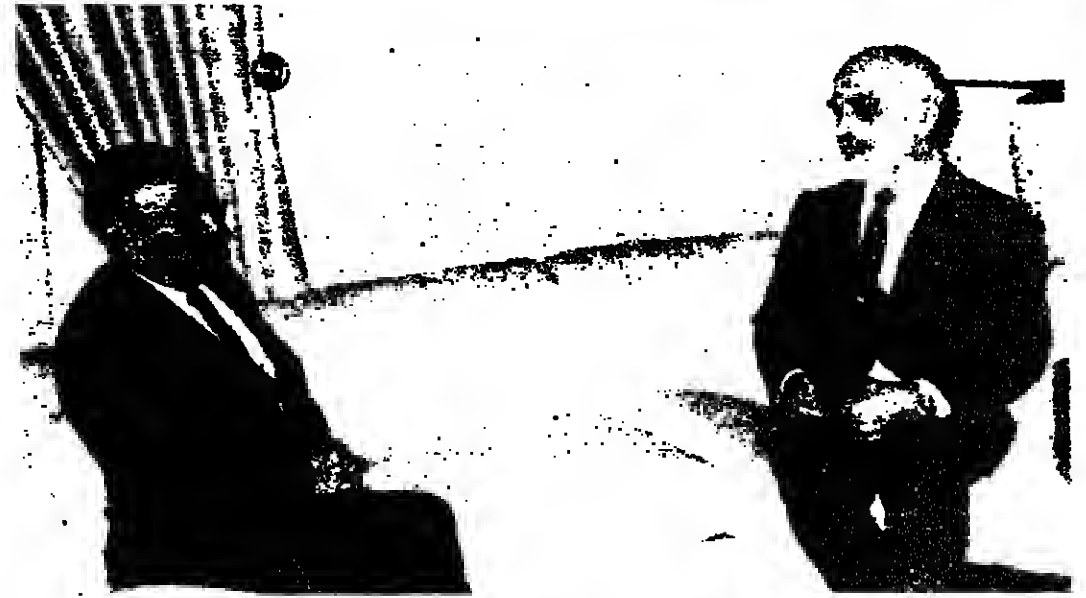
Officials who signed the agreement said that the new university could open its doors in the coming academic year.

RSS Acting President Samir Abu Ajweh and Dr. Seif Ramahi, who represents the local firm owning the new university, signed the agreement at the RSS offices.

According to Dr. Ramahi, the Applied Science University will be a private university which will help offer chances to Jordanian students wishing to acquire higher education. He said that the university's main student body will be composed of Jordanian expatriates.

Once the Applied Science University has been established, Jordan will have six universities, of which four are run by the government. These are: the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, Muta University and the Jordan University for Science and Technology.

Dr. Ramahi said that the new university was a private institution funded by the Arab International Company for Education and Investment whose funds come from shareholders in Jordan and abroad.



His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday receives UNRWA Commissioner-General Ihter Turkmen (Petra photo)

## King pays tribute to role of UNRWA

Monarch wishes new chief of U.N. relief agency every success

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein said Wednesday that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) plays a significant role in the process of alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian people.

The King, who was speaking during a meeting with UNRWA's newly appointed Commissioner General Ihter Turkmen at the Royal Court, said that the sufferings of the Palestinians living in the occupied Arab territories have exceeded all boundaries.

King Hussein wished Turkmen success in his humanitarian mission and in managing UNRWA affairs. The agency was created to provide essential services to the Palestinian refugees.

The meeting, at the Royal Court, was attended by U.N. Resident Representative in Jordan Ali Atiga.

Mr. Turkmen, who arrived in Amman from the occupied territories, met here Wednesday with Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri for a review of the agency's services to the refugees.

Masri was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying that UNRWA should intensify its efforts and provide improved educational and health services in a manner that can meet the growing needs of the people in the Israeli-held Arab territories.

Mr. Masri emphasised the need for UNRWA and the Jordanian government to maintain their cooperation and coordination in the process of providing services to the refugees living in the country.

Dr. Ahmad Qatanani, director-general of the Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry, and UNRWA Director in Jordan Franke de Jonge attended the meeting.

Turkmen arrived via the King Hussein Bridge over the River Jordan following visits to the occupied territories where he inspected UNRWA's services to the refugees there.

Turkmen, who succeeded Giorgis Giacomelli of Italy to the post, was welcomed upon arrival by Dr. Qatanani, de Jonge and

the Turkish ambassador to Jordan, among other officials.

Turkmen, 63, came to UNRWA from Paris where he had served as Turkey's ambassador to France since 1988.

According to UNRWA officials here, Turkmen has scheduled other meetings with Jordanian officials to discuss the agency's services in Jordan.

As commissioner general of UNRWA, Turkmen will be residing in the agency's headquarters in Vienna.

His predecessor, Mr. Giacomelli, had ended his mandate last month after serving as commissioner general for five years. Mr. Giacomelli is now director of the United Nations programme for combating narcotics.

UNRWA's 18,500 employees, mainly Palestinian teachers and health workers, provide education, health, relief and social services to more than 2.4 million registered Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

## Jordan, Libya to discuss cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Jordanian economic delegation Wednesday left for Libya for talks on means of promoting economic and trade cooperation between Amman and Tripoli.

The delegation is led by Dr. Ibrahim Badran, Ministry of Industry and Trade secretary general who will spend several days in talks with Libyan officials and businessmen.

In a pre-departure statement, Dr. Badran said that since the two countries signed their 1968 trade and economic agreement efforts were continuing for further boosting bilateral ties.

"In 1978 the two countries signed a scientific, technical and economic cooperation agreement providing for close cooperation. That agreement stipulated that Jordan export cereals, seeds, medicine, veterinary medicine and paper to Libya and import Libyan ammonia for industrial purposes," Dr. Badran said.

Over the past three years Libya has contracted hundreds of Jordanian doctors and specialists to work in Libyan hospitals and the two countries exchanged visits by health teams to promote bilateral cooperation in health-related fields.

## American group seeks truth behind Gulf war through project

By Serene Halasa  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Louise Cainkar, director of the Palestine Human Rights Information Centre (PHRIC) International, based in Chicago, said in a recent visit to Jordan that her aim was to bring to the American public the truth behind the Gulf war by providing "a human side of the war."

"The American public has not seen the human face of Iraqis in this war. They don't feel responsible for hurting anybody because they have not seen them (Iraqi victims of war)," Ms. Cainkar said.

Ms. Cainkar is convinced that the only way Americans can see what their government's foreign policy is like is by witnessing things first hand. She is now

working on a project that entails setting up contacts in Iraq to report about the human agony and suffering of the people there.

"Our project will focus on bringing the human side of this war to the American people," Ms. Cainkar said. "Unless the American public sees it, it won't think about it and this is what our job will be all about," she added.

"We cannot undo what we did, but at least we would hopefully prevent future wars and make people less enphoric about weapons and high-tech planes and bombers, and we will try to make them feel responsible for people in the world," Ms. Cainkar said.

A direct result of this war, according to Cainkar, is that it broke the Vietnam syndrome. She said that now she fears that

with this syndrome over, people in the United States will not have any second thoughts about going into a war anywhere in the world.

"We have to work very hard to counter this view," she added.

PHRIC-International is the publishing and distributing arm of the PHRIC in Jerusalem. The Chicago-based centre monitors, in coordination with the centre in Jerusalem, human rights violations in the occupied territories.

The monitoring is done through a team of 30 people who go out in the field and record incidents of human rights violations such as demolishing homes, arresting Palestinians, holding them illegally, torturing and killing Palestinians.

"At the end of every month we publish a comprehensive report of about 60 pages with statistics and stories of Palestinian human rights violations under Israeli occupation," Ms. Cainkar said. "In case of emergencies, such as the (blanket) curfew that the Israelis enforced at the start of the Gulf war, we publish a report every two weeks," she added.

"We are the voice of the inside for the outside," she said, describing the work of the Chicago-based centre.

The centre's publication has a circulation of 800, among non-governmental organisations and individuals in 146 countries. "Our reports fan out through these organisations and individuals," she explained, "and thus reach tens of thousands of readers."

"We have a very good reputation and we are known for our accurate information," she said, adding that things the centre is not sure of are not printed in the reports.

"We have never been challenged, but some Israeli organisations try to find justification for the human rights violations against Palestinians by taking the matter to a higher level, such as the National Security of Israel," Ms. Cainkar said.

Ms. Cainkar, a native American, who became "intrigued"

with the Arab World after a visit to Morocco, said that their centre played an important role with the anti-war movement since the onset of the Gulf crisis. "People were calling us up for information about the Arab World because of our solidarity with the Palestinian people," she explained.

Prior to the Gulf crisis, Ms. Cainkar said the centre was regarded as an outpost within the peace movement. "They always regarded our issue (rights of Palestinians) as divisive," she said, explaining that "divisive" meant that if these peace movements took a stand against the Israeli government, they would be threatened with a cut of financial support and activist pullouts.

"The criticism of Israel is not allowed in the United States," she said.

"Most Americans don't know we exist, because they are ignorant about other things happening in the world," she said. "Groups like us, who are in contradiction with American foreign policy, get no media coverage and no financial support," she added.

But as the Gulf crisis erupted, Ms. Cainkar said the anti-war movement felt it needed to take a stand. "They (the anti-war movement) opposed the deployment of half a million American soldiers in the Gulf, and the financial obligations of this deployment, especially when the U.S. was facing domestic problems," she said.

According to Ms. Cainkar, the centre held sessions analysing Gulf history and reasons behind the U.S. presence there. "We started speaking about the contradictory U.S. policy regarding the occupation issue, and we ended up linking the Palestinian and Gulf issues," Ms. Cainkar said, adding ironically that this was the linkage the United States refused to make.

In conclusion, Ms. Cainkar summed up her mission by saying: "We have a big problem to conquer, and if we don't do it no one will."

## WHAT'S GOING ON

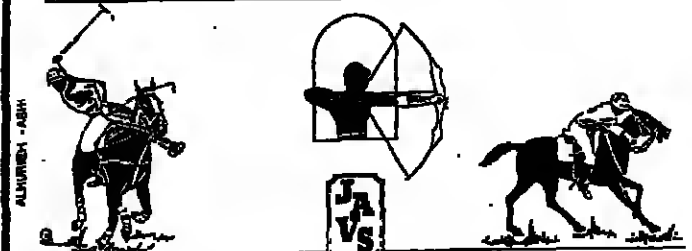
### BAZAAR

★ Charity bazaar at the women's Islamic Cultural Centre, Karak.

## OPENING SOON

# JORDAN VALLEY ARABIAN STUD

## RIDING POLO ARCHERY



The Jordan valley Arabian Stud announces the opening of a new club which includes riding, polo and archery. The Stud is located 3 kilometers from the airport on the road to Madaba. The terrain is sandy and ideal for riding and galloping. There will be instructors for riding, archery and polo.

Special care will be provided for children. The Stud offers sandwiches and soft drinks only.

However, members are allowed to bring their own. The Stud offers shelter for horse owners including food and veterinary care for a certain fee.

Special discounts are provided to members of the Armed Forces and Royal Jordanian employees. Handicapped children are welcome to see the Stud for free riding including refreshments.

For further information:

Jordan Valley Arabian Stud  
Tel. 829882 Fax. 829883 P.O. Box 926500 Amman-Jordan  
From 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



## Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.  
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## Myopia can't bring peace

THERE IS a flurry of U.S. diplomatic activity ostensibly aimed to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. What is striking about this activity is that it is conducted out of and away from the U.N. Security Council. The best evidence of this is America's rejection of the idea of convening an international peace conference on the Palestinian problem under the umbrella of the U.N.

The new effort was started by President George Bush's bold pronouncements last week on the terms of a possible peace accord between Arabs and Israelis.

Secretary of State James Baker picked up where his predecessor left off, by a shuttle in the Middle East in search of an acceptable formula to settle the decades old problems of the region. Mr. Baker is conducting his quest on the proposition of striking while the iron is hot. But in doing this he has so far excluded any role for the U.N. system and concentrated on engaging the parties to the conflict in bilateral contacts that could lead to bilateral negotiations away from the all-encompassing Security Council forum and the U.N. as a whole.

Washington's approach appears to be in stark contrast with its posture on the Gulf conflict and the war that ensued from it. Throughout the Gulf crisis, President Bush and his administration made sure that the Security Council was seized with the Kuwaiti case from points A to Z, and deliberately prevented any bilateral contacts to resolve it out of the context of the council and its 12 resolutions. It will be recalled that Arab efforts, including those carried out by Jordan to defuse the crisis right at the outset, were purposely frustrated. And even though Resolution 660 specifically called for Kuwaiti-Iraq talks to discuss their differences, there is hardly a whisper now about that part of the first-ever resolution on the Kuwaiti conflict.

The shock waves of this new U.S. "peace" offensive have hit many concerned capitals which had hitherto subscribed to the involvement of the council in the implementation of its resolutions on the Palestine issue. Cairo was the first to change its position on the conference idea and now echoes Mr. Baker's famous statement that time is not ripe to convene such a parley now. Egypt had been a steady supporter of the proposed conference as a mechanism to implement Resolutions 242 and 338. However, why and how it and other capitals are shifting positions on the idea is still unclear to us. Maybe it is because the Americans are telling them that Israel would not agree to it now, and therefore there is no need to waste more time on an unworkable proposal.

If this is indeed the case, it might be worth asking the question of whether compartmentalising the peace effort can be of much help either. For one thing, disengaging wider Arab-Israeli conflict from the Palestinian problem, which is its core, is like separating the atom from its nucleus. The amount of energy needed to do it is simply too massive to even contemplate. To divide what should be a collective effort and responsibility into bilateral endeavours, on the other hand, is extremely reductionist and doomed. Finally, to ignore the PLO and overlook Jordan's role is a sure recipe for failure of any peace process.

Let the Americans and their allies be serious for once. Peace, if it is to be attained, has to be the result of a collective and concerted effort by all the parties concerned. This is no time for would-be peace makers to be short-sighted and naive.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

WE ARE NOT concerned over statements by President Bush or any member of his administration because we are fed up with American statements about the Middle East, as we have been hearing them over the past 24 years, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday. We are not demanding that Washington impose an economic embargo on Israel and starve its people as it did to Iraq nor are we asking that the U.S. war planes raid civilian targets and kill innocent women and children as the Americans did to the Iraqi people, said the paper. What we are demanding is the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 regardless of the forum through which this can be implemented, he is an international conference or otherwise, the paper noted. It said that the aim of implementing U.N. resolutions is ending Israel's aggression and occupation of Arab land in Palestine, Lebanon and Syria that has lasted for 24 years. We want to make it clear for the United States that we are not seeking an international conference as an end by itself, and we can do without it if it is not designed to implement Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy, the paper continued. It said that we do not want the American administration to keep us busy with empty statements causing further splits among the Arabs and resulting in no solution for the Palestine problem.

It is a fact that the Jordanian society has been accustomed to shopping in the evening and at night during the holy month of Ramadan, and they can do that only after breakfast in the evening, says a columnist in Al Ra'i daily Wednesday. But in view of the current regulations, shopkeepers have to close down their stores by 8:30 in the evening, depriving the public from shopping or worshipping at mosques which normally is held in the evening due to the difficulties in transport in the light of the present fuel-saving regulations that went into effect last month, Nazah notes. He says that in April Jordan normally switches back to summer time which means advancing the clocks by 60 minutes so that Jordan's time will be three hours ahead of Greenwich Meantime. The change into summer time means that evening does not come before 8:00 p.m. when it is time for breakfast after which people normally go out for shopping, the writer notes. He says that should the present regulations continue, it will be difficult for the people to exercise their usual Ramadan life neither will they be able to visit the Ramadan souq which the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has prepared to open during Ramadan evenings.

# Iraqis bitter over 'being let down'

By P.V. Vivekanand

DEEP RESENTMENT and disappointment over what is seen as betrayal by Arabs dominate the thinking of many Iraqis over the outcome of the Gulf war. And as the Iraqi people try to cope with the devastation and aftereffects of the war, the wounds that Arab "inaction" or "alliance with the enemy" has inflicted on the Iraqi psyche will take years to heal.

By and large, most Iraqis appear to have expected major upheavals in the Arab World, particularly in those Arab states which were partners in the U.S.-led anti-Iraqi coalition, to bring about fundamental change in the alliance's military and political strategy in the conflict.

"They had 40 days to think and rise up, not to mention the six months since the crisis erupted," said an elderly grocer in the heart of Baghdad as he settled down to a discourse, which more or less summed up the sentiments of many Iraqis this reporter met in the Iraqi capital during a five-day visit there last week.

The grocer, who preferred to be identified only as Abu Mustafa, has two sons in the Iraqi army and he had no information of their whereabouts as of last Saturday. But he preferred not to discuss that. Instead he steered back the focus to the dominant Iraqi sentiment of disillusion and bitterness over "being let down by the Arabs."

"The Arab masses, who extended great support and encouragement to us in Iraq during the run-up to the war, did practically very little when the decisive moment came with the ground battle," said Abu

Mustafa with a deep sigh.

"We have indeed suffered the worst from the war and we have to live with it for many years," he said. "But we feel pity for the Arab masses since what was at stake in the conflict was the Arab future and Arab rights and the loss is not just for Iraq but for the entire Arab World."

According to Abu Mustafa, "what makes it worse is that Iraq did not expect or ask anyone to send their army to defend it against the Americans and their allies. We were capable of doing it ourselves if only something had happened to undermine the enemy's strategy in the war."

Abu Mustafa's reference was to the 40 days of intense bombardment the Iraqis sustained while every indication was that the ground battle would have been the most decisive turn in the confrontation.

Abu Mustafa, 55, believes that "what lies ahead of the Arabs is God knows how many years of American-led Western tutelage and domination with very little hope of being able to raise their head and demand their rights."

"Yes, we were indeed betrayed by our own Arab brothers," he said. "It would be more right and accurate to say that the Arabs have betrayed themselves," he added with an afterthought. "I will cut off my right arm if Palestine is ever returned to the Palestinians after what happened," he used a typical Arabic expression to emphasise his point.

The argument does not necessarily imply that the Iraqi bid to link the Gulf crisis with

the Palestinian problem was the best approach. Rather the belief is that the quest for linkage and the resistance it met from the anti-Iraq coalition had undermined and projected the state of affairs in the Arab World and prepared the ground for a sweeping political storm throughout the Arab World.

"Yes, we were indeed betrayed by our own Arab brothers. It would be more right and accurate to say that the Arabs have betrayed themselves. 'I will cut off my right arm if Palestine is ever returned to the Palestinians after what happened.'"

Far-fetched as it might seem, this line of thinking is the most prevalent among many Iraqis, particularly in view of the picture Iraqis formed from the streets of the Arab World. The picture was one of great encouragement in the conflict and inherent promises that when the crucial moment came, enough unknowns would be thrown into the allied strategy to dissuade the U.S. from pursuing the military option or at least add new elements which would have scrambled the allies' planning into unwittingly favouring the Iraqis in military terms.

Khalil Sawan, now an unemployed advertising executive, argued that "the Arab World and masses — mind you, I am not including the regimes which joined the war against Iraq — expected the Iraqis to fight the Arab battle against neo-colonialism and foreign

domination while they themselves moved very little to bring about changes at home."

For Sawan and many others like him, the explanation is simple: If there were to be enough turmoil in the societies of the Arab partners in the U.S.-led front to warrant a total reassessment of the thinking of their governments,

then this would have thrown a heavy spanner in the works of the coalition. But would it not have meant violence and deaths, given the traditional heavybanded approach of Arab regimes towards internal dissent?

Western-educated Sawan has an easy answer: "Of course it would have meant exactly these repercussions. But, if our memory serves us right, then many in these countries were calling for jihad in support of Iraq. What better way of waging jihad at home against oppression and in demanding that the governments go for the right thing? Would it not have served the purpose since jihad also means martyrdom in defence of one's right and against injustice?"

Is Jordan included in this classification, and how Iraqi laymen view the Jordanian position? The response of Ahmad, a

taxi driver, was typical of many.

"For once after many years in the Arab World, we found there was one country whose people and government shared the same sentiment and spoke with one voice in defence of Arab rights away from Western domination," said Ahmad, who now sells vegetables in a Baghdad market after finding himself out of a job as a result of fuel rationing. "Jordan raised the sole genuine voice among the false clamour for international legitimacy. But Jordan had its limitations. We appreciate and are thankful for the moral and physical support that Jordanians gave us. They could not have done any more, what with the Israelis waiting on the other side."

The political awareness of the Iraqis is indeed sometimes baffling, given the rhetoric that has been dished out to them for many years. And precisely from this political awareness stems the firm belief of the Iraqi man on the street that it was not simply a question of the invasion of Kuwait that led to the war and that the conflict could have been a major positive turning point in Arab history.

When it comes to the issue of Kuwait, most Iraqis wave aside the implications of the invasion of the emirate and argue that the Iraqi move had only helped expose "realities" in the Arab World.

"Can there be any doubt now in the Arab World who represents what?" asked Khurshid Qasem, who sells second-hand electronic goods

in Baghdad's flea market. "If anything, the Arabs should be thankful to Iraq to have exposed the real colours of some of those Arab regimes which claim to represent Arab aspirations and interests."

"They have been putting up pretences and arguing that they have been doing a lot to help the Arab cause," Khaled, Qasem's assistant, joined the discussion. "In reality their policies since the beginning had always been detrimental to Arab causes for they were only concerned with their luxurious living with Western help but generously paid for by Arab wealth."

How do the Iraqis feel about the leadership and what is portrayed as rising anger and opposition to the government of President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad itself?

"That is for us Iraqis to decide," answered Qasem and Khaled in unison. "We don't need the Americans or anyone else to tell us what to do with our internal affairs."

"What the Arabs should do is to stop speculating what is going to happen to Iraq's leadership and start thinking what their leaders have done to them and have in store for them," said Qasem.

"A great historic opportunity has been lost to reassert Arab dignity, honour and pride after decades," reflected Sawan, as he looked out of a government bus at the economic devastation the allied bombing has wreaked on the Iraqi capital. "And we Iraqis will continue to pay the price for many years to come."

The writer is on the staff of the Jordan Times. He has just returned from a trip to Baghdad.

## Kuwait's ruling family, opposition resume struggle

By Donald Forbes  
Reuters

KUWAIT — Kuwait's powerful ruling family and political opponents who claim strong popular support have resumed a struggle for power interrupted by seven months of Iraqi occupation.

Moderate leaders of the Movement for Constitutional Democracy (MCD) say they fear political instability and violence unless the grip of the Sabah dynasty is loosened.

They are counting on the United States, and other western countries whose forces helped liberate Kuwait to press for a swift return to democracy.

The Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed Al Sabah, promised to introduce more democracy when questioned on Saturday by reporters travelling with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

He met Baker in the Saudi resort of Taif, where the ruling family and members of the government sought refuge when Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2.

Kuwaitis closed ranks after the invasion and the opposition suspended its reform agitation. But the truce is over.

The MCD says the Iraqi invasion aggravated political divisions and weakened the Sabah family's claim to full power.

Meshari Al Osaibi, head of the Kuwait Bar Association, said: "This is the worst government we have ever had. It isn't supported by the people."

Heading the MCD's demands are the immediate recall of parliament which was dissolved in 1986 and the formation of a government of experts to rebuild the country shattered by Iraqi sabotage.

They are insisting also on the restoration of Kuwait's 1962 constitution which guarantees democratic freedoms as well as the role of the Sabahs who have ruled Kuwait for 250 years.

The post-war martial law administration, headed by Sheikh Jaber's heir-apparent and prime minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, has so far conceded only the prospect of fresh elections which western diplomats do not expect before six months.

The opposition, led by wealthy merchants and professionals, is angered that a government it regards as elitist and incompetent is taking crucial decisions about the future without reference to ordinary Kuwaitis.

Osaibi said: "Billions of dollars are being spent on reconstruction but no one has any say over what is being done except the ministers involved."

"There will be no control over them during the months until the elections. We want parliament recalled to exercise control in the meantime."

The MCD is concerned that Kuwait is awash with weapons. "We are worried that there are so many people with guns, that the army should still be on the streets two weeks after the war and that the police have not reappeared," Osaibi said. "Every man has a gun at home now."

Opposition anxiety is shared by some western diplomats. One senior envoy, who declined to be named, said: "It's going to be impossible to disarm everybody because of the huge number of weapons loose in the country."

Political violence, rare in modern Kuwait, has already surfaced since the end of the war.

Hamed Al Jouan, another opposition lawyer and MCD member was shot and paralyse

d from the chest down at his home on Feb. 28 by a gunman who spoke with a Kuwaiti accent before he escaped.

"The shooting of Jouan was a first," Osaibi said. "It was certainly not a personal attack and it was certainly politically motivated."

In hospital, Jouan said he opposed fresh elections and demanded the recall of the parliament which the Emir dissolved during the Iran-Iraq war.

"What we want is a way of supervising the government," he said. "There is no need for new elections. The old, freely-elected parliament still has 2-1/2 years left of its term."

The jockeying between the ruling family and the opposition is a continuation of a struggle begun before the Iraqi invasion.

In the previous months, MCD supporters were harassed, their telephones tapped and at least 12 former members of parliament were each detained for up to a week.

The opposition boycotted attempts by the Emir to set up a largely ceremonial national assembly last June in place of parliament.

Diplomatic sources said the United States was pressing the Emir to open up his government and was confident that representation to it would be broadened.

They discounted prospects that the Kuwaitis would allow the more conservative Saudis to dictate the extent of democratisation.

"The Kuwaitis will do what they want to do while acknowledging the debt of gratitude they owe to the Saudis for all their help during the invasion," one said.

## 'Impetus for Middle East peace could evaporate'

By Jonathan Wright  
Reuters

CAIRO — The new impetus to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict could easily go the way of previous peace initiatives which foundered on the future of the Israeli-occupied territories and Palestinian representation, diplomats say.

Some say the prospects for Middle East peace have rarely been better because of the close alliance forged between the United States and eight Arab states in opposition to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait last year.

Others, with memories of the failed chances of the past, are more cautious. "The obstacles are myriad. At the most basic level it's a lack of trust," said a western diplomat based in Cairo.

The optimists argue the allied victory in Kuwait last month left Arab moderates in the ascendant and showed Israel to be a burden rather than an asset of U.S. interests in the region.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who is touring the region, said in Israel Monday there may be a chance for some "new thinking" on both sides of the Arab-Israeli divide.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, whose government has previously opposed the principle of "land for peace," said that what he had heard of Baker's talks with Arab leaders showed "encouraging signs which we did not see before now."

"If there was ever a good moment (for peace), then this is the moment," said an Arab ambassador.

"The United States has shown it is willing to take some risks and keep up the tempo," he added.

One compromise hinted at by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday was over an inter-

national conference that Arab states have so far insisted was the only possible forum for Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

Israel has consistently opposed such a conference. Washington has been cool to the idea and now Mubarak is saying that the time is not ripe for such a conference which needed good preparation.

But other issues appear deadlocked.

At this early stage in the process, it is difficult to see how the United States, the inevitable mediator, can both satisfy Palestinian demands for self-determination, the diplomatic codeword for statehood, and convince Israel that a Palestinian state would not threaten its security.

The Gulf war, far from convincing Israelis and Palestinians of the need for peace, in fact deepened the chasm between them.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein became a Palestinian hero and Palestinians applauded Iraqi missile attacks on Israel. Israelis said this reinforced their argument that they cannot trust the Palestinians as neighbours in peace.

The United States and its allies now face the task of rehabilitating the Palestinians as negotiating partners without humiliating them or seeming to impose a new Palestinian leadership, diplomats said.

"Someone has to generate the trust that is needed... they (the Americans) figure they may have weeks, not months, to show some progress," said one diplomat.

An official from Egypt, the Arab country at the centre of the anti-Iraqi alliance, said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) of Yasser Arafat must recognise it had made a mistake

by trying to link the fates of Kuwait and of Palestine.

"Any peace settlement must be based on the rights of the Palestinians, not on the rights of the PLO," he added.

A western diplomat said the ideal outcome for Washington would be Arafat's replacement from within. Otherwise, serious peace talks would have to wait until he rowed back from his pro-Iraqi position and regained international credibility.

It was Israel's consistent refusal to negotiate with the PLO which led to the breakdown of James Baker's last peace initiative almost exactly a year ago.

The so-called Baker plan, which was also billed as a great chance for peace, proposed direct talks between the Israeli government and Palestinians from inside and outside the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

It side-stepped the problem of PLO representation by co-opting Palestinians who were not overtly PLO members but who had good nationalist credentials and implicit PLO approval.

Even if the talks had taken place, there was no guarantee they would have led to an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, a basic Arab demand.

The most any Israeli government has ever offered is limited Palestinian autonomy, to be followed by talks on a permanent solution. The Israeli rightwingers who dominate the government oppose withdrawal, at least from the West Bank.

An Israeli government spokesman said on Tuesday that focusing on the U.N. resolutions calling for Israeli withdrawal would lead to failure. Washington and its allies see U.N. Resolution 242 and 338 as the basis for any settlement.

so different.

But the figures point to deep-rooted problems in a society steeped in violence and Bush drew on the experience of the Gulf war to suggest that not all is lost in the fight against crime in the United States.

"The kind of moral force and national will that freed Kuwait city from abuse can free America's cities from crime," he said. "Among the lessons is that in furtherance of a widely accepted moral value, collective action succeeds."

Entire neighbourhoods, the president said, were living under "the tyranny of fear" and must be liberated.

## America's 'way of life' costs U.S. more lives than wars do

By Bernd Debusmann  
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The Gulf war has underscored a grim fact of life in the United States: for the past four decades more Americans have killed each other than have died on the battlefronts of foreign wars.

"It's outrageous, it's wrong, and it's going to change," President George Bush declared this month after contrasting the murder rate in the United States — by far the highest in the western world — with the low toll of the war against Iraq.

"Now that the shooting has stopped overseas, we've got to

redouble our efforts to silence the guns here at home," Bush told an anti-crime conference.

If history serves as a guide, that goal is likely to prove elusive. Over the past four decades, the U.S. murder rate has gone up and up and up. Now, the United States is so far ahead in international murder statistics that it is in a class of its own, with kill rates up to 73 times as high as in other western countries.

Even during the wars in Korea and Vietnam, prolonged and major conflicts by any standard, more Americans were murdered at home than killed in combat abroad.

In the 10 years of U.S. involve-

ment in Vietnam, murder victims in the United States outnumbered American soldiers killed in action by roughly four to one.

During the 1950-1953 Korean war, more than twice as many U.S. citizens were murdered in the United States than died in combat.

In the week following the December 20, 1989, invasion of Panama, 28 U.S. soldiers died. In the same week, 36 civilians were murdered in New York, shot, stabbed, and in one case pushed out of the window of a speeding train.

No other conflict has driven home the relative safety of the military battlefield as clearly as

the Gulf war, won at the cost of 115 American soldiers killed in action and 339 wounded.

"During the first three days of the ground offensive, more Americans were killed in some American cities than at the entire Kuwaiti front," Bush told police officials in Washington.

"Think of it, one of our brave national guardsmen may have actually been safer in the midst of the largest armoured offensive in history than he would have been on the streets of his home town."

Statistically, most major American cities were more dangerous than the Kuwaiti front in the first three days of the ground war. The U.S. Defence Department listed

three killed — one a day.

In Washington and its suburbs, the average daily murder told now stands at 1.8 per day. New York records an average of more than five deaths by violence a day. In Los Angeles, 2.5 a day on average are killed.

In the six months between the deployment of the first American troops in Saudi Arabia and the end of the Gulf war, more than 10,000 Americans were murdered. In 1990, the U.S. murder toll exceeded 23,000 a record.

Statisticians say comparisons between victims of war and victims of crime are misleading because the circumstances and causes are



# Jordan Times WEEKENDER

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By Peter Smerdon  
Reuter

## Beirut's ruined museum exhibits concrete blocks and graffiti

BEIRUT — Beirut's National Museum, closed to the public but left open to civil war since 1975, exhibits a sombre collection of concrete blocks and gunmen's graffiti.

Dr. Camille Asmar, director of the Antiquities Department, touches a six-foot-high rectangular block in the gallery of colossus with its smashed windows and empty display cases.

"It is a sarcophagus, 12th century B.C. from Byblos," he said. "And like the others, it was too heavy to move to safety."

Asmar looks intently at the massive grey block, damp from rain falling through shell holes in the ceiling.

It is as if he can still see the ornate sarcophagus, safe within tonnes of poured concrete protecting it from fires, shells, bullets and bombs.

The sandstone museum, a landmark on the green line battle zone dividing Beirut for nearly 16 years, is a touching but rarely visited casualty of war.

Its yellow stone facade

and the entrance steps are pockmarked by thousands of bullet holes. Last year, tank fire smashed its black metal gates and left the interior exposed.

Inside, a dozen other concrete blocks looking like modern sculptures stand in the abandoned Gallery of Ramses, Hall of Ahiram, Hall of Sages, Hall of Sacred Dance and the Gallery of the Alphabet.

Deep under several metres of concrete lie other sarcophagi, stelae (engraved tablets), statues and bas-reliefs the museum could not move.

Two concrete-clad Egyptian sphinxes from the second century B.C. guard the entrance to the Hall of Ahiram.

In 1975, most other exhibits — ranging from prehistoric bone tools to Byzantine jewelry — were cached in vaults under the central bank

and other places Asmar refuses to identify.

Asmar, 56, worked in the restoration department until 1983 and since as director.

Asked when the concrete blocks will be opened, he sighs. "There is so much to do. Everything was damaged. We must first repair the museum building and make it secure."

"Then perhaps we can think about what goes into the museum."

A visit to the galleries is only now possible because the Ministry of Tourism believes the civil war may be over. It allows reporters to tour the site in the hope of receiving foreign funding for reconstruction.

"We lost a lot," says Asmar. "About 20 per cent of deposits were burned or destroyed. But look at the city centre, the beautiful old

buildings, the souk. No one will rebuild them."

The museum was worst hit by the latest round of fighting — nine months of conflict between the Lebanese Force (LF) militia and Christian troops that ended last October.

"There are international agreements that cultural buildings should be protected in times of war. We had no protection," says Asmar.

A few mosaics and frescoes still occupy the museum, where in 1975 the entry fee was one Lebanese pound — now worth less than one-tenth of a U.S. cent due to an economic crisis fueled by the war.

Asmar steps out into the overgrown garden, full of piles of masonry blown off the roof, glass and other hazards.

"Careful, there's an un-

exploded shell around here somewhere. I forget exactly where," he peers over his spectacles.

Asmar's memory for the exhibits fails here. He initially identifies a concrete block as another stone coffin.

"No, it's not. I remember now. This one is a Roman altar with an inscription," he says.

He estimates it will cost at least \$1 million to repair war damage to the museum.

"S.O.S. ... we need outside help. We cannot do it alone," the director says.

Asked whether gunmen used the museum as a position or had looted exhibits, Asmar seeks to avoid being dragged into the conflict.

"I can't talk about politics. I won't say if they came in. I won't talk about the museum."

Most people long ago forgot the museum, built in 1938 in the style of an Egyptian temple with bulbous columns.

To them "the museum" is the adjacent crossing, the most famous of several routes linking what was Christian east Beirut to the mainly Muslim west. Snipers frequently made it a killing zone.

But the rival militiamen on both sides of the building disappeared last December as part of a peace plan to put the greater Beirut area under army control for the first time.

"Please don't look at that," Asmar says when a reporter inspects slogans painted on a wall near two Roman frescoes.

"The Baath (Party) is our way and (Syrian President Hafez) Al-Assad is our leader," says one, apparently painted by a Syrian soldier.

"Our antiquities are not only of Lebanese interest," Asmar says. "They are international and range from the Phoenician alphabet. This collection was one of the best."

## When 'toys' play a deadly role

By Clare Pedrick

TURIN — Officials at the head offices of MVM prior to describe the company as one that is involved in industrial design. "We design kettles and coffee machines, handbags and suitcases. We even designed two watches that are now in the Museum of Modern Art in New York," said a spokeswoman.

So they did. But nine years ago, company President Mario Moselli decided to branch out into another field, one which even the spokeswoman concedes is "a rather unusual business."

Company officials now admit that cleverly faked tanks and fighter planes manufactured by MVM are almost certainly being used as decoys by the Iraqis. The life-sized models, made out of wood, metal, paper mache and fiberglass, are believed to have been dotted around at strategic points in Iraq, to draw allied fire and confuse analysts who assess bomb damage.

The MVM catalogue, a glossy colour brochure sent out to interested clients, shows models of Leopard tanks used by NATO, and T55's used by the Soviet Union. There are Phantom jets, F4's and F16's, all of them cunningly crafted to look like the real thing. Prices range from between \$13,500 to \$35,750.

The Turin company also makes decoy missile launchers at \$3500 apiece — though not Scud missile launchers, the spokeswoman hastily points out. "But they (Iraqis) could have adapted some of the models," she said.

MVM declines to reveal the names of its clients, but the company admits it is "very probable" that Iraq was using its models. "We could have sold them to someone, who then sold them on to Iraq," said the spokeswoman. "Those tanks have traveled."

U.S. General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Gulf war, has said he believes Iraqi forces

have made wide use of decoys. Experts say a good decoy is hard to spot from the air in a cursory examination of aerial photographs taken on bombing sorties. Only skilled technicians working with computers can detect the difference. The decoy theory could help explain how Iraq has managed to keep part of its air force and missile launchers intact.

Signor Moselli's improbable business dates back to 1962 when, according to the company's spokeswoman, "he had the idea of making imitations of tanks and airplanes." "The idea was to produce items which would be used as toys," she explained. "As mock-ups for training purposes, as a way of saving money: \$26,750 is no small sum, but it's certainly a lot less than the cost of blowing up the real thing."

At present, business is slow. It was better a few years ago. Still, the tone at the Turin company is faintly apologetic. "If I thought our models had been used in this



The Turin-based company MVM, run by Mario Moselli and his sister Giulia, manufactures scale models of tanks, fighter planes and missile launchers.

war, I would be very troubled," said the spokeswoman.

"I would hate to think that people had been risking their

lives to bomb targets that are just toys." World News Link.

## War unlikely to hurt Gulbenkian Foundation built on Iraqi oil

By Paul Ames  
The Associated Press

LISBON, Portugal — Calouste Gulbenkian is considered by many to be the father of the Middle East oil industry.

Fortunately for Portugal's researchers, artists, writers, and musicians, the riches bequeathed by the Istanbul-born Armenian are no longer based on his 5-per cent stake in Iraqi petroleum.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the subsequent international embargo against Baghdad and the Gulf war provoked fears that the vital flow of funds from the Gulbenkian Foundation would be choked off.

Gulbenkian pioneered oil extraction in late 19th-century Iraq, then part of the Ottoman Empire.

After Turkey's defeat in World War I, he negotiated the division of the Turkish Petroleum Co. among Western oil firms.

Gulbenkian's share was a slice of the company's capital that brought him a vast personal fortune and the nickname "Mr. 5 per cent."

When Gulbenkian died in

1955, he left most of his colossal wealth to set up a foundation promoting "charitable, artistic, educational and scientific objectives" in Portugal.

Today, with capital of 210 billion escudos (\$1.6 billion), the foundation, popularly known simply as 'the Gulbenkian', is the largest of its type in Europe.

To this small nation, the legacy was a godsend.

Its donations form a substantial part of the support in Portugal for research in health, social welfare, education and science and, most importantly, the arts.

"Portuguese culture wouldn't be what it is today if it weren't for the Gulbenkian," said Paula Rego, a leading Portuguese painter. "It's made all the difference."

The Gulbenkian has eased fears that the Gulf war could damage its fortune and philanthropic spending.

Director of oil and gas services Micael Gulbenkian, great-nephew of the founda-

tion's founder, explained that the foundation would down its operations in Baghdad after the Baath Party nationalised the Iraqi Petroleum Company in 1972.

Today, revenue from oil interests based mainly in Oman and the United Arab Emirates account for only about 30 per cent of the foundation's income, according to Gulbenkian.

Most of the Gulbenkian's money is tied up in a 165-billion-escudo (\$1.27 billion) investment portfolio. The foundation's business activities are managed by Participations and Explorations Corp. (Partex), set up by Calouste Gulbenkian in 1988.

Even if we lose all our positions there (in the Gulf) it won't make any difference to us," Gulbenkian President Jose De Azeredo Perdigao told the Lisbon weekly Expresso.

Born in 1869, Calouste Gulbenkian became a British

citizen and felt at home both in Europe and the Middle East.

We continued to negotiate between European and U.S. oil companies and the Arab states that emerged from the Ottoman Empire.

Before the 1972 nationalisation of the Iraqi Petroleum Co., the Gulbenkian directed considerable funds to social, educational and cultural projects in Iraq.

"My great-uncle would be very, very sad about the current conflict," Micael Gulbenkian said.

Azeredo Perdigao, 94, has managed the foundation since its establishment. He was Calouste Gulbenkian's lawyer in Portugal where the oil king spent his last 13 years after arriving in Lisbon in 1942 from war-torn France.

The foundation's showpiece is a museum containing 6,400 pieces that once formed Gulbenkian's private collection. They reflect his appreciation of both Eastern

and European art.

The museum's Islamic Art galleries are an Aladdin's cave of Persian carpets, Turkish ceramics and delicately-crafted Syrian mosque lamps.

Elsewhere, there are ancient Egyptian sculptures, illustrated Bibles from medieval Armenia, Chinese porcelain dating back to the 13th century. Paintings include major works by Rubens, Rembrandt, Manet and Renoir.

The museum complex also houses a 1,300-seat concert hall, home to the world-class Gulbenkian Orchestra, choir and ballet. There is a library and a large gallery for temporary exhibitions.

A few metres away through the foundation's landscaped gardens is the Gulbenkian Modern Art Centre containing an unparalleled collection of contemporary Portuguese painting, and an auditorium used mainly for jazz and contemporary music performances.

In addition, the foundation funds performances by visiting musicians and theatres, organises important temporary exhibitions and supports local artists with generous grants.

"They've been immensely supportive to me," said Rego, who received grants in the 1960s. In 1988 her paintings, which now sell for up to 20 million escudos (\$150,000), were the subject of a major retrospective exhibition in the Gulbenkian's main gallery.

During 1984-88, foundation donations totalled 30 billion escudos (\$230 billion).

In 1988, 40 per cent of donations went to cultural projects, 35 per cent to education, 14 per cent to welfare and 11 per cent to science. Portugal received 77 per cent of all allocations.

The Gulbenkian also works in the five Portuguese-speaking African nations, helping train doctors in Cape Verde, build libraries in Mozambique and print schoolbooks in Angola.

The World Armenian Community is another major beneficiary of Gulbenkian support.

## The killing ground

By E. Yaghi

Ah, if beside the dead  
Slumbered the pain!  
Ah, if the hearts that bled  
Slept with the slain!  
If the grief died! — But no,  
Death will not have it so,  
"Before Sedan" — Austin Dobson

The war had ended. Yousef, a 55 year old Iraqi, sat at a local cafe in Baghdad and looked out on the murky waters of the Tigris River. His dark eyes smouldered and his expression displayed anger, despair, frustration and deep pain. To his friend Hani who was sitting beside him, he said, "the bombs have finally stopped falling. Our city is ravaged and ruined. My family is gone forever and now it seems that they have died in vain. I have no more faith in anything or anyone anymore for we have been betrayed by all humanity."

His angry eyes met Hani's and in them he found a mirror of his own rage and frustration. "I too, have lost all faith in humanity. What is there to live for now?" His friend said with bitterness in his voice. "Our homes have been destroyed and our wives and children are all dead." Hani picked up his half empty glass of amber tea and proceeded to drink. "At least we can probably count ourselves as lucky because our children were killed in the Amiryeh bomb shelter and not hideously injured as many other children have been from the war. We are still alive. Yousef. Perhaps we can help shape our country's future. Drink your tea, it's getting cold."

But Yousef's tea remained unfinished and ignored. Instead his empty glare returned to the Tigris. A throng of people milled back and forth carting home huge containers of polluted water for their daily needs. Some women with piles of laundry balanced on their heads, made their way down the banks of the river where they would compare war notes with other women while washing their clothes by hand. Their feigned laughter taunted Yousef as he remembered the laughter of his own wife that yet echoed in his heart. Under the shrouded sun, some children began to scamper out in the jagged streets and soon they began to jump and play in the sullen air. Among the children was a boy just about the same age as Yousef's dead son and close by was a little girl with freshly plaited hair whose shrill juvenile voice pierced Yousef's soul. She was about the same age as his daughter who was also dead.

Near the Tigris, some trees seemed to boast the fact that they had escaped pillage and injury. Leaves were forming on their branches, hinting the ushering of spring. Some birds flew overhead in the gray sky belying the nightmare that had recently taken place. "Indeed," Yousef thought, "spring will be black in Baghdad this year."

He sighed and with a heavy spirit said to his friend, "Come on Hani. Let's go for a walk. I can't just sit here thinking of the past."

So they both got up and one of the two men paid for the tea. Yousef pushed his hands in his pockets and bent his head as the friends sauntered. His shoulders slumped. He kicked at some rocks with his shoes and said, "Let's go back to my house for a while. We can listen to the news before supper."

Hani agreed. They then made their way through the broken streets and cautious crowds, past the souq where vendors had spread an assortment of vegetables and fruits along war sunken sidewalks. There was a green leafy smell that mixed with the odor of the fruits but Yousef paid no attention. He didn't care for food. It was as tasteless as his life appeared to be. "If only we hadn't taken our families to the shelter, they might still be alive today," he said guiltily. "Why are we being punished? What has the occupation of Kuwait got to do with innocent Iraqi women and children? What did our babies do to deserve such vicious murder?"

"As you said, you can't just keep thinking of the past. Yes, we've lost everything. The cemeteries are full of women babies and elderly who were all innocent victims of the American-led bombing. But what has meant to be has now become. We can't change anything. All our tears and anger won't bring our families back again," Hani said in a tone that appeared to half plead and half order. "We took our families to the shelter to protect them from the bombs while we stayed outside to protect our homes. We couldn't have known that they were going to perish!"

Yousef's wounded eyes met his friends. His wavy black hair was tousled and windblown. Some gray hair had begun to weave itself through the black strands, giving him a distinguished look. "If only I had been able to kiss them all good-bye. I didn't know at the time I'd never see them again. The world has deserted us. I'll never have faith in human beings again!"

As they talked, they slowly walked past a hospital where many of the bombing casualties had been taken. Their moans and groans filled the stagnant air. Yousef shot out in anger. "Our hospitals are full of injured and dying. The stench of death is everywhere. I curse those responsible for our disasters. May Bush be forever tortured for all the misery he has inflicted on us!"

After a short while they came to their own demolished neighbourhood. Hani's house was buried in a rubble of twisted iron and powdered bricks. He spent his lonely nights in Yousef's house which was still partly standing. Outside Yousef's abode, a single rose bush was still growing unharmed as though there had never been a war. Yousef felt himself pulled to it. A small pink flower was budding on one of the thorny branches. With tears in his eyes, Yousef said, "This was the bush that my wife planted a few years ago. She's dead. Your wife's dead. All our children have died too, but the rose bush still lives!"

"An excellent sign of life. Yousef. Perhaps it seems to be a contradiction to the reality of our dead beloved. Nevertheless, we've got to clean the rubble out of your house. We'll rebuild the rest of your house and then we can build a new one for me. There is much yet to live for. You'll see. God gave us both the gift of life, possibly to help reconstruct a new Iraq and a new and better future for our people."

During the conversation, they entered Yousef's damaged home. His children's toys were still scattered on the floor. His family's portrait was still hanging on the wall. He turned his face quickly when he saw their haunting faces staring at him. The two friends sat down on chairs in the living room. Yousef flicked on the Japanese made radio and they both intently listened to the latest news.

After a period of long silence, Yousef muttered, "for the past six weeks we have been living in a killing ground where we were like sheep herded for slaughter. Now America and its allies are calling this war a great victory for themselves and a humiliating defeat for us. But we haven't been defeated Hani! We fought 30 countries and we lasted for 42 days without any outside help. We dealt some forceful blows ourselves on our enemies and let them know we are people to reckon with. There is no defeat, but only victory. In death we will begin a new life and yes, my friend, in the silence of our torture and painful tomorrows, we will rebuild our lives and the future of a new Iraq!" In his eyes shone a glimmer of hope as he continued, "Bush is intoxicated with his power. He has prepared armies and material resources against us and God's holy plan, but such schemes will be Bush's own undoing. He cannot prevail against God. Righteousness will overcome evil. We shall overcome our transgressors one day!"



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, March 14

1917 — China severs diplomatic relations with Germany in World War I.

1957 — Eoka offers to suspend terrorist activities on Cyprus if Archbishop Makarios is released.

1965 — Israel's cabinet formally approves establishment of diplomatic relations with West Germany.

1973 — United States relaxes embargo on arms shipments to Pakistan and India.

1976 — Egypt's President Anwar Sadat asks parliament to cancel treaty with Soviet Union, charging that Moscow failed to provide arms that had been promised.

1978 — Israeli troops invade Lebanon on mission Israel says is designed to "root out" commando bases.

1987 — At least 12 people are killed in escalated Communist insurgency in Philippines with congressional elections almost two months away.

1988 — Iran and Iraq unleash missiles on each other's capitals as so-called "war of the cities" erupts.

1990 — Fire causes extensive damage to plant in Rabta, Libya, which U.S. charged was producing chemical weapons.

Friday, March 15

44 B.C. — Roman dictator Julius Caesar is assassinated.

1560 — Huguenot conspiracy at Amboise fails to rescue King Francis II of France from Guise factions, and Prince of Conde subsequently is imprisoned by the Duke of Guise.

1603 — Samuel de Champlain, French navigator and explorer, sails for the new world.

1776 — U.S. Congress resolves that authority of

British crown should be suppressed.

1874 — France assumes protectorate over central Indochina region of Annam, which breaks off vassalage of China.

1894 — France and Germany agree on boundaries between French Congo and Cameroons.

1903 — British conquest of northern Nigeria is complete.

1916 — U.S. force of 12,000 soldiers under General J. Pershing is ordered to Mexico to capture revolutionary leader Pancho Villa.

1921 — Ruanda, East Africa, is ceded to Britain by Belgium.

1943 — Japanese planes attack Darwin, Australia, in World War II.

1962 — U.S. military training personnel in South Vietnam exchange fire with communist guerrilla forces.

1969 — Fighting breaks out between Soviet and Chinese forces along border of those two nations.

1973 — U.S. and Soviet envoys begin fourth round of SALT talks in Vienna, Austria, on limiting arms.

1987 — Bomb explodes on railway bridge in southern India, sending passenger train crashing into river bed, killing at least 22 people.

1988 — Israeli authorities impose travel ban on Palestinians in occupied territories.

1989 — Soviet Union's President Mikhail Gorbachev calls for rapid measures to ease chronic Soviet food shortages.

1990 — Iraq executes London-based newspaper reporter after closed-trial conviction for spying.

Saturday, March 16

1521 — Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan reaches Philippine islands.

1527 — Mogul Emperor Barbar defeats Hindu confederacy at Kanwarha, India.

1534 — England severs all relations with Roman Catholic papacy.

1690 — France's King Louis XIV sends troops to Ireland to fight for King James II.

1812 — Austria, in alliance with France, agrees to provide army for Napoleon Bonaparte.

1844 — Greece adopts constitution with two chambers.

1851 — Spanish Concordat with papacy, whereby Catholicism becomes sole faith in Spain and church gains control of education and the press.

1906 — Japan nationalizes its railways.

1917 — Russia's Tsar Nicholas II abdicates and Prince George Lvov, Paul Miliukov and Alexander Kerensky form ministry.

1922 — Britain recognises Kingdom of Egypt under Fuad I, with joint Anglo-Egyptian sovereignty over Sudan.

1934 — Rome protocols signed between Italy, Austria and Hungary to form Danubian Bloc against Little Entente of Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia.

1935 — Germany repudiates disarmament clauses of Versailles Treaty that ended World War I.

1945 — Japanese resistance to U.S. assault on Iwo Jima in Pacific comes to end in World War II.

1987 — Torrential rains and mudslides in Tadzhikistan, Soviet Union, destroy dam, killing 19 people and leaving 9 others missing.

1989 — Guerrillas sabotage electricity Poles and stage hit-run attacks in campaign to disrupt forthcoming presidential election in El Salvador.

1990 — Hours after his inauguration to a strengthened presidency, Mikhail Gorbachev persuades Soviet parliament to tone down resolution invalidating Lithuanian declaration of independence.

Sunday, March 17

1649 — England's parliament abolishes House of Lords.

1658 — Royalist conspiracy is discovered in England.

1776 — American revolutionaries force British to evacuate Boston, Massachusetts.

1813 — Prussia's Frederick William III declares war on France.

1848 — Revolution under Daniele Manin begins in Venice, Italy.

1860 — Second Maori War breaks out in New Zealand.

1888 — Britain establishes protectorate over Sarawak on Borneo.

1921 — Poland's constitution is established.

1948 — Britain, France, Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg sign Brussels Treaty for 50-year alliance against armed attack in Europe, and economic, social and military cooperation.

1962 — Soviet Union accuses United States of fighting "undeclared war" in Vietnam and demands removal of American military forces there.

1973 — Cambodian Air Force officer steals plane and bombs presidential palace in Phnom Penh, missing President Lon Nol but killing at least 20 people.

1977 — Angolan troops invading Zaire take important copper mining centre of Kolwezi.

By The Associated Press

## Beggars keep their skills sharp in Asia's teeming cities

By Bill Tarrant  
Reuters

CALCUTTA — A young girl covered in dust thrusts a baby clad only in a dirty T-shirt at the taxi window.

"No mummy, no pappu," she pleads, her face crumpling on the verge of tears. "Don't give to her, she'll just give it to her father for hooch," the Calcutta cab driver growls to his passenger.

A boy with no hands or feet clumps along on all fours on wooden blocks in front of the Grand Hotel in Calcutta, a begging bowl gripped in his teeth. Surprisingly agile, he keeps pace with pedestrians until they dig into their pockets for change.

Across Asia, a vast underground community of filthy children, fingerless lepers, the blind and crippled, lunatics and thieves, ascetics and pretenders roam crowded cities begging for handouts.

They can prick your conscience. But familiarity sometimes breeds contempt.

The impulse to bestow charity is tempered by seeing the same wretches on the same street corners day after day, knowing some may be practising the tricks of the beggar's trade.

Rent-a-baby is one ruse. "I send them (the babies) back to their parents in the afternoon and give them about a third of my income," said one

woman who is a fixture at a major Jakarta intersection.

She said she collects about 6,000 rupiah a day (\$3.25), about twice the average daily income of Indonesians.

A Sikh army officer, besieged in his car by beggars at a Punjab railway crossing in north India, delivered a spirited lecture on contraception to a woman armed with a recently-born infant.

"Of course, it's not hers," he remarked cheerfully to his passengers. "I see her often. She always has a 10-day-old baby."

Social workers in New Delhi say the borrowed babies are sometimes seduced by lacing their milk with opium so they'll sleep through a shift on the beggar's beat.

Some teenagers have become adept at the art of disguising limbs so that they look like cripples.

Tucking a leg up into a pair of baggy pants or a sarong and daubing themselves with dirt, they crawl piteously up to cars waiting at traffic lights.

"But we rarely use this trick any more, since the police often chase us," said Rachmat, a 13-year-old Jakarta resident.

"If I look healthy, nobody will give me money. I'd rather hide one of my arms to attract them — and still be able to run away when security officers chase me," he said.

Begging can be profitable

for bogus beggars as well as for the genuinely destitute.

Pakistani beggars earn about 7,000 rupees (\$316) a month, more than newly-graduated doctors or engineers, the Society for the Eradication of Social Evils said in a recent survey.

"Many beggars have saving accounts," said Sheikh Ali Mohammad, a bank official in Karachi.

But social workers say most beggars are genuinely in need.

Beggar often has a religious dispensation. In Hinduism, followed by three-quarters of India's 850 million people, giving alms is dharma, or religious duty.

In holy towns like Benares and Ayodhya along the Ganges River, Indians on pilgrimages willingly support thousands of sadhus, elderly men and women who have renounced the world to roam temple-lined streets seeking enlightenment.

Christians and Muslims are also encouraged by their religion to give charity to the poor and afflicted.

"Beggary thrives because people think they'll go to heaven by giving alms," said social worker Shahida Jameel in Karachi.

In the Bangladeshi hill town of Chittagong last May, 32 people were trampled to death when thousands of beggars stampeded for free clothes and cash handouts.

Distributing clothes and

money to the poor is a tradition in Muslim Bangladesh before Eid Al Fitr, which marks the end of the fasting month or Ramadan.

In Manila, beggars flock to major churches.

"On Wednesday they're in one church south of Manila where there are a lot of people fulfilling religious obligations," said Social Welfare Ministry spokeswoman Tess Padua. "On Friday they go to Quiapo Church in the city centre for the same reason."

Christmas brings out seasonal beggars in the Philippines.

Street children run from car to car singing snatches of carols for loose change. Turn them down and the holy songs may abruptly change to obscenities.

"Some make it a profession, but nobody has really come out (and proved) that there are begging syndicates," Padua said.

Bnt beggary rings, sometimes linked to organised prostitution, operate in Karachi, Bombay and other cities, social workers say.

Children in India have been kidnapped by such rings.

"Sometimes bones in their hands or feet are broken and twisted so they will be dependent on the gangs and unsuited for other work," said Meenu Patras, a social worker for a Christian fellowship in Delhi.

## Historian: Columbus may have been Norwegian

By Doug Mellgren

The Associated Press  
OSLO, Norway — Norwegians have been miffed for centuries about Christopher Columbus stealing credit from Leif Ericsson for discovering the 'New World.'

But a Norwegian maritime history writer said Tuesday it really makes no difference because Columbus may have been Norwegian.

Tor Busch Sannes does not claim to have definitive proof. Instead, he cites a series of coincidences, historical fact and imaginative interpretation he hopes historians will investigate further.

His book, "Christopher Columbus — a European from Norway?" suggests that Columbus was a Norwegian nobleman named Christopher Bonde who discovered America in 1477, not in 1492.

Columbus actually undertook a voyage north of Iceland in 1477, according to the World Book Encyclopedia. Sannes argues that voyage could have reached Canada or New England 15 years before Columbus laid anchor in the West Indies in 1492.

"America is getting ready to celebrate the 500th anniversary (of Columbus' discovery) 15 years too late,"

said Sannes.

The book has generated considerable news coverage, skepticism and amusement in Norway. Some see it as belated revenge for overlooking the Viking seafarer Ericsson's discovery of North America nearly 500 years earlier.

Many Norwegians believe Ericsson was one of their countrymen. But historians believe he was actually born in Iceland of a Norwegian father.

Knut Utstein Kloster, the millionaire shipowner who funded Sannes' work, said he didn't know whether Columbus was a Norwegian, and neither did Sannes. "But this is an exciting story that should inspire researchers and others to carry on work with the theory," he said.

"Circumstantial evidence cannot be considered definitive proof," agreed Sannes. "But I hope that the possibility will be seriously researched by historians."

Sannes' publisher, Norsk Maritimt Forlag A.S., print about two books a year, mainly on maritime history.

History books generally say Columbus was born in 1451, the son of an impoverished weaver from Genoa, Italy, named Domenico and his wife Suzanne.

Historians dispute the details of the explorer's clouded childhood. Several countries — including Spain, Portugal and Italy — claim him as a native son. Sannes said the historical evidence could just as easily lead to a conclusion that Columbus was born in Norway.

"The most convincing evidence was Columbus' coat of arms," said Sannes. In the position designating a father's lineage, it bears an emblem identical to that used by the Bonde family, he said.

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Sannes said Columbus' father could have been a member of the noble Bonde family who he believes fled to Italy in the 1400s to avoid persecution in Norway.

Sannes cited other bits of evidence: Columbus never wrote in Italian, he called himself a foreigner in southern Europe and he was described in some biographies as tall, fair and blue-eyed, typical Nordic characteristics.

"I believe what I wrote," Sannes said at a news conference to introduce the book, which is being translated into English. "There is nothing in history to show he was not born in Norway."

The book suggests that Columbus was invited to join the 1477 Iceland expedition because he learned to sail in Nordic waters as a Norwegian youngster in Nordfjord, on Norway's midwestern coast.

Nordfjord's mayor, Nils R. Sandal, is skeptical of such theories. "I think we'll drag our feet for a while before raising any Columbus monuments in Nordfjord," he said, adding jokingly that town residents should search their attics for any Norwegian-language letters written by Columbus.

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## Weekend Crossword

STRIKING PHRASES  
By L. Miller

1. The first part of a word.  
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Omar Sharif

By Katia Sabet

CAIRO — Awarded the Grand Prix of the Nile at the recent 14th Cairo Film Festival, Omar Sharif walked to the mikes and then emotion took over: The movie idol who has spent decades in front of international cameras as playing the most dashing and romantic characters was overwhelmed. Tears and a

bout of shyness kept him from uttering more than a few words of thanks for the prize that rewards a long and prestigious career.

Outside the movie world, Omar Sharif, once introduced as the man every Egyptian would like to be, offers just as rich a character as he does on the big screen — all poise and charisma. The scene is a bustling cafe in a five-star hotel. Seated with

his back to the room, which is full of tourists and busy waiters, he is making a vain attempt not to be noticed by several middle-aged women who are clearly dying to ask him for his autograph.

Question: Omar Sharif, does it irritate you at all to have such a famous face and to be recognised wherever you go?

Answer: "Not at all. It was my choice to become an actor, which is after all a career in which exhibitionism plays a strong role and a job where success can only be measured by the fact that people recognise you. I like being recognised, I'd be a hypocrite if I said anything different. I think I'll be very sad when no one recognises me anymore or asks for my autograph, and I'll probably regret all those autographs that I've refused to sign in the past."

Q: Has it ever bothered you?

A: "Yes, it does sometimes irritate me... when I want to have a quiet dinner with someone, when I want to chat without being continually interrupted by people coming up to say hello — which they always do very charmingly, by the way. Most of all, it bothers me in my private life. It is very hard to find someone who is prepared to live with a person who is perpetually being approached by complete strangers."

Q: Was that the reason for your separation from Faten Hamama (a movie star in her own right and Sharif's ex-wife)?

A: "No. It was our lifestyle that caused us to part. When I did Lawrence Of Arabia and became internationally famous, my work forced me to travel worldwide. Faten, on the other hand, stayed behind in Egypt to pursue her own career. We hardly ever saw each other, and it is very hard for a marriage to survive physical separation."

Q: But Faten followed you to Paris.

A: "That's true. We tried. You see, we never argued or had rows. We did try, but it just didn't work."

Q: Would you say that your relationship with Faten was the most important of your entire life?

A: "Definitely, because it has been the only real one. It has to have been the most important, I never gave again that much to a relationship."

Q: Did you have a happy childhood?

A: "Extremely happy. My parents adored each other and adored their children. I think you can count yourself very lucky in life — and it's something that happens very rarely — if you have both parents, and if those parents love each other. You need to have both, for different reasons."

Q: Your childhood and adolescent years seem to have

been more closely linked with Alexandria than with Cairo.

A: "I was born in Alexandria, then I left when I was 4 years old. But emotionally I was very closely tied to the place. We always spent our summers there."

Q: When you were at Victoria College, in Cairo, did you already have some idea that you would one day be famous?

A: "I was sure of it. And my friends, my teachers, were sure of it as well. I was very clever at school... I acted a lot at college and I enjoyed it a great deal."

Q: So you had already chosen your future career?

A: "Yes, in spite of my teachers who wanted me to go into sciences. I was very good at math and physics and my teachers thought I should do something in that field. Then there was my mother. Lots of mothers are ambitious for their children, but mine was particularly so. She was very tough with me — very gentle, but at the same time, very tough. She gave me a hiding every time I did something that she considered fell short of perfection."

Q: You don't look the type of person to have had hidings as a child.

A: "Oh yes, it used to happen virtually every day. I adore my mother. We have a very close relationship. And yet she used to give me a hiding very often, with her

slipper. It didn't hurt that much. As long as it was my mother handing it out, I could take it. My father never raised a finger to me, but when he was angry with me it hurt far more. I would rather have had a hiding than see that angry expression on my father's face."

Q: Can you say that you are satisfied with what you have achieved with your life so far?

A: "Of course not. I don't think anyone is ever satisfied with what they have done with their lives. It's practically a mathematical impossibility to be satisfied, because that would mean that there is no tomorrow."

Q: I wasn't speaking about tomorrow. I asked you a question what had to do with the past.

A: "You are wrong. The past has no limits. It is linked to the future. Tomorrow is part of the past. Yesterday was the tomorrow of the day before yesterday... I have no past, because I can see my past in the present and in the future. I can't be satisfied or dissatisfied with the past because it is part of my life, which is continuing. The only time I will be able to judge whether I am satisfied or dissatisfied with my life will be at the moment of my death, and I sincerely hope that I will not know beforehand when I am about to die."

Q: Some believe that it is possible to make an assess-

ment of one's past.

A: "To make an assessment, it must be finished. But in life, nothing is finished because what you would define as "finished" does in fact continue to have a very strong influence on the person you are... One's memories are part of one's very life. But even events that you don't remember are in there somewhere, whether you like it or not."

Q: And what if memories change? For example, things that once made you happy but which you now recall with boredom, or even disgust.

A: "No, I never feel disgust. And I'm never bored."

Q: That is what I would call — with your permission — a positive assessment.

A: "Not at all. There are lots of things in my life that I would have done differently. But at the time, there was no question of that, given the sum of my experiences at that moment. You see, I am a strong believer in destiny, even though I am also a Cartesian by nature."

Q: You are quite an unusual mixture of eastern thought and Western culture.

A: "That is why I cannot live in Egypt. (The actor makes his home in Paris.) I would miss a certain cultural lifestyle to which I have become accustomed — the theatre, the opera, concerts, conversations. I have a small circle of friends. We have dinner together, and we dis-

cuss topics which interest us."

Q: What kinds of topics?

A: "Music, for example. The opera. We see all the operas. My three closest friends are crazy about music and are philosophy teachers. I, myself, have no grounding in the subject, but it is really necessary to have formal training? Philosophy is a subject which exists and doesn't exist. In my opinion, a good philosophical question would be: "Can one learn philosophy?"

Q: What effect has being a grandfather had on you? Do you feel like a grandfather, deep inside?

A: "I don't know what it means to feel like a grandfather "deep inside." We're back to philosophy again. I know that I have an adorable small child who is my grandchild. I play with him. I love him. I also feel a certain — how can I put it? — a certain sense of pride seeing that continuity. Without doubt, there is a great deal of selfishness involved in all this."

As the sun sinks behind the Great Pyramid in a perfect picture postcard scene, Omar Sharif flashes a big smile. For the umpteenth time, a tourist hands him an autograph book to be signed. Sharif obliges with impeccable grace. And it occurs that the best role of his entire career would be Sharif playing Sharif on the big screen — World News Link.

## Mean streets of New York give Miss Saigon star the jitters

By Rene Pastor  
Reuter

MANILA — The prospect of topping the bill on Broadway in the hit musical Miss Saigon does not make Lea Salonga nervous in the least. What really gives her the jitters is the thought of being mugged on New York's mean streets.

Salonga, a perky 19-year-old Filipina who won the Laurence Olivier Award for best actress for her portrayal of a Vietnamese prostitute in Miss Saigon in London's West End, leapt and screamed for joy after winning the role on Broadway.

Excited as she was about working there, reports of rapes in Central Park and lurid accounts of muggings in the city's Graffiti-covered subways made Salonga uneasy about going.

"If I find out that it is what

they tell me it is... then I don't want to work in New York," she said, shortly before flying there with her mother, Ligaya, for the start of rehearsals.

"I will pretty much ask for car service because I am afraid of (going around the city)," she said. "I'm just there to work. Anyway, I'm not going to be there for ever."

Miss Saigon, which has already notched up a record \$30 million in advance ticket sales, is scheduled to open in Broadway on April 11.

Salonga, who started her acting career at the age of seven, is looking forward to the fresh challenge that Broadway will offer her. But she is still a little concerned about lingering resentment from U.S. actresses she did out of a job by retaining the lead role of Kim — the part

that projected her to stardom.

She was only able to join the show when the American Actors' Union, equity, granted her permission to perform on Broadway after a bitter battle waged by Miss Saigon producer Cameron Mackintosh.

"It's not my fault that I was taken. I never expected to get it in New York. I thought it was going to be London and that was it," she said.

She shrugs off criticism that her role as a hooker who falls in love with a U.S. serviceman in the Vietnam War, gets pregnant and commits suicide perpetuates a stereotype of Asian women as prostitutes or servants.

"I don't think so. Vietnamese girls were doing that out of need and not out of want. It's not fun having strange men paw you and slobber over you and treat

you like dirt," Salonga said, relaxing at home in the Philippines.

"I think we're just portraying what really happened in Vietnam. Asian women have to be very strong — stronger than a lot of men would care to admit," she said.

The problem, she believes, is that men fail to understand women. "If only men could give birth, then they'd know what real pain is. The male ego is so big," she said.

"I don't think men would readily sacrifice their lives for their children the way women do."

Salonga has yet to make such a sacrifice herself, but she had to give up plans of becoming a doctor when she was chosen to play the role of Kim in the musical in London last year.

When she returned home to the Philippines to spend the Christmas holidays with her family and do a series of benefit concerts in Manila, Filipinos mobbed her as a heroine.

Despite the adulation, she was angry at accusations that success and the faint British accent she acquired in London had turned her into a snob.

"It's frustrating," she snapped, eyes narrowing in disgust. "It upsets me, it angers me, it makes me sad. That people you don't even know or you otherwise trust would still be (making such accusations) is beyond me."

"She is too trusting. People think she's mature after hearing her speak, but she's still a bit naive," her mother said. "That's why she liked London — because nobody bothered her there."



(From left to right: Jonathan Pryce, Simon Bowman and Lea Salonga in Miss Saigon).

## Hollywood's dream machine bankrolled by Dutch dollars

By Cynthia Osterman  
Reuter

ROTTERDAM — Hollywood may grab all the glamour in the movie business, but Rotterdam holds the purse strings.

Improbable though it may seem, the gritty Dutch port is home to the biggest banker in the independent film world. Financier Frans Afman first crossed paths with tinsel-town by chance two decades ago. Since then he has backed about 500 movies to become the moneymen behind a score of Hollywood blockbusters.

His credits range from Rocky and Platoon to Dances With Wolves which has just collected 12 Oscar nominations.

For most of his film financing career, Afman's base of operations has been Credit Lyonnais Bank Nederland NV (CLBN), a subsidiary of the huge French bank.

Industry analysts estimate the Dutch unit has more than \$1 billion in outstanding loans to independent filmmakers, who work outside Hollywood's seven estab-

lished studios.

Afman, 57, is a lawyer by training who works in a nondescript building on Rotterdam's main street. His modest office is an unlikely setting for a movie mogul.

Stacks of papers litter his desk, while posters of past projects, including Superman and The Name Of The Rose, line the walls.

With his gleaming bald pate and ruddy cheeks, Afman looks the model of the stolid Dutch burgher and he takes pains to dispel the image of film financing as a fly-by-night venture.

"This is not any more risky than any other business, if you do it well. You should apply the basic banking principles and never get carried away with the romance of it," he said.

In the 1970s independent films were sometimes precarious ventures. But these days they are often the work of production companies that are industry forces in their own right and account for about half of Hollywood's annual output.

CLBN calculates it lends money to one in five major

U.S. films and is the biggest in the business of bankrolling independents, ahead of America's Chemical Bank.

"As far as financing independents go, they are the leader and the most knowledgeable," said Roger Smith, executive vice president of Carolco Pictures, one of the biggest independent movie companies and a major Afman client.

Afman's first brush with Hollywood came during a business trip to the United States in 1972 and a chance meeting with producer Dino De Laurentiis.

At the time Afman was working for a little-known Dutch bank called Slavenburg's and De Laurentiis was trying to break Hollywood's hold on the sponsorship and copyrights for virtually all major movies.

Afman saw an opportunity to marry his financial engineering to a new market and plunged in.

He devised a system with De Laurentiis which allowed them to circumvent the big studios and raise money by selling distribution rights for films in advance of their pro-

duction.

The deal guaranteed a minimum return for a film and, by providing collateral for bank loans, laid the groundwork for the rise of independent moviemakers.

"Once we were in the business, we started to like it. No one had really experimented with the financing of independently made pictures," Afman said.

Credit Lyonnais bought Slavenburg's in 1981. Backed by the French bank, Afman's business grew rapidly and he became a fixture at Hollywood premieres and the Cannes Film Festival.

His success inspired imitators. Dutch merchant bank Pierson, Holding Pierson, a unit of ABN Amro Holding NV, and NMB Postbank Groep NV have set up film units.

But Afman is quick to warn of the potential pitfalls of lending to moviemakers. He insists producers submit detailed budgets, contracts with actors and directors, distribution agreements and special insurance policies guaranteeing completion before forking out a penny.

## The 'Girl From Ipanema' goes to 'Reconciliation'

By Tim Klase  
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — "Soft and tall and tan and lovely..."

It was in 1963 that the dreamy hit of The Girl From Ipanema lifted Astrud Gilberto to worldwide recognition like a freshly risen cloud on a warm breeze.

Today, at age 50, many of the men she passes still say, "ahhh." Petite, fashionable without flair, dark hair cropped close, she could be taken for 10 or 20 years younger even at close range.

She works about 150 dates a year at clubs, jazz festivals and concerts in Europe, Japan and the United States.

"I used to be very scared of singing in clubs," said Gilberto, sipping coffee with cream and sugar between sets at The Jazz Alley. "For many years I didn't, because of the closeness to the audience... but I overcame that."

Backed by a quartet that includes her son, Marcelo Gilberto, her voice still contains traces of the almost wispiness that was her early trademark. But there is more assurance, range and

variety of material.

"I never thought of myself as a jazz artist in the pure sense of jazz, if there is such a thing anymore," she said.

"I kind of just take for granted that that's the way things ought to be... that a lot of good things come from this mingling between jazz and pop, so I'm not fighting to be any particular thing, fitting into any particular category."

"For some people it's a shock if the last thing they've heard was something from Astrud in 1964," says the younger Gilberto, who plays bass. "After a matter of couple of songs, they're probably still in shock."

"I don't think they join us until about the middle of the set, and then all of a sudden they're, like, 'oh, this is cool, too.'"

At The Jazz Alley, an airy dinner club and bar more than three-quarters full for an early midweek set, the reception from about 150 patrons was warm from the start.

She sang slightly more in Portuguese than in English, ranging from such old Bossa Nova standards as Ipanema and One-Note Samba to her

own more pop- and rock-flavoured pieces like Flora, written for fellow Brazilian jazz singer Flora Purim, and Reconciliation, which she introduced as "my latest composition."

The latter piece featured such lines as, "let's not have a fight, let's not be angry, because I'm missing you," and "here we are together. Let's kiss and make it better, better than before."

"All of my lyrics have something of my personal life, and Reconciliation has a little bit to do with tarot cards, which is something that I'm very fascinated with," she said. "Actually, the title of the song is Reconciliation (the six of cups)."

Did she have anyone in particular in mind?

"Maybe," she said with a slight laugh. "Maybe wishful thinking."

Gilberto was born Astrud Evangelina Weinert in Bahia, grew up in Rio De Janeiro and married Bossa Nova pioneer Joao Gilberto Oliveira (the last name was dropped inadvertently for a recording date) at age 19. "I met him through some

of my friends. We were all teenagers and we were all fascinated by him," she said. "We had just become popular."

Four years later, on a whim, he persuaded her to sing Ipanema in English for a recording date he had organized with Stan Getz.

"It was the first great turnaround in my life, and also very scary because I had to learn a lot of music and I had not any training," she said. The recording won a Grammy Award in 1964, and she toured with Getz for six months. Within a year she and Gilberto were divorced. She married an American and reared two children in a Philadelphia suburb, limiting her performances.

One major crowd-pleaser in recent club dates, Emorio, starts with a long solo by Dafonseca on berimbau, a bow and gourd instrument, and develops into Afro-Brazilian instrumental outpouring with Gilberto chanting in the background.

"I always considered the voice a part of the band, rather than something that is up front," she said.



By Richard Murphy  
Reuter

## German abortion law — an anomaly of unification

BONN — West German women can have abortions virtually on demand if they travel to the east of their reunited country, but if their pregnancy is terminated at a Dutch clinic they risk police harassment and prosecution.

East and west Germany agreed to retain separate abortion laws for a transitional period when they united in October 1990.

Now this anomaly has become a major political issue after several women alleged they had been detained by German border police and subjected to compulsory medical examinations after having abortions in the Netherlands.

Their harrowing stories drew an angry response from politicians who want to bring west Germany's restrictive laws into line with liberal regulations still in force in the

former east Germany. "This is a scandal. It is a return to the Middle Ages," said Irmgard Adam-Schwaetzer, who heads the Liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) women's group and is also construction minister in Chancellor Helmut Kohl's centre-right coalition cabinet. A Dutch member of the European Parliament called the incidents "a witch-hunt against women," while German Women and Youth Minister Angela Merkel, a member of Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), said the reports showed how necessary a revision of west Germany's strict laws had become.

"Help rather than punishment is what is needed," she said.

In the former Communist

east, women may terminate a pregnancy at will during its first three months.

In the west, paragraph 218 of the criminal code makes abortion a crime punishable by three years in prison unless a woman receives counselling and gets a doctor to certify that the abortion is necessary for her physical or mental health.

Abortions carried out abroad are illegal unless the woman can produce evidence of counselling.

The weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* says police give prosecutors around 10 reports each year on German women suspected of taking advantage of liberal abortion laws in the Netherlands. Dutch clinics are just a few hours' drive away for millions of

Germans.

The Interior Ministry said it was aware of only two cases in recent years, the second of them in January, but it did not know if local prosecutors had brought charges in either case.

Spokesman Roland Bachmeier said police had no orders to seek evidence of illegal abortions abroad, but he did not deny women's claims that they had been examined against their will.

Under the German unity treaty, a new abortion law for the whole country must be on the statute book by the end of 1992. Conservative claims that the east-west discrepancy would lead to "abortion tourism" in the meantime appear not to have come true.

All parties are treating abortion law as a matter of conscience on which parliamentarians may vote freely.

East German politicians, virtually all of whom support the region's liberal regulations, see the abortion issue as a test of how far Western-dominated united Germany is prepared to adapt to take account of the concerns of their more secular society.

"My goal is to clearly reduce the number of abortions. We have seen that this is not achieved by threatening punishment," says Merkel, one of only three east Germans in the cabinet.

"Society has an obligation to make it easier for women to say yes to children. Ultimately the woman herself must decide 'Do I want this child or not?'"

Although no proposals have yet been finalised, it is clear that the new law will be more liberal than the present one.

An FDP proposal, allowing abortion virtually on demand in the first three months provided the woman undergoes counselling, has a strong chance of winning a majority in parliament.

To encourage mothers to keep their babies, the FDP wants the state to give them extra money and provide other assistance such as guaranteed kindergarten places.

The debate is dominated by women and cuts across party lines, with many members of the mainly Catholic CDU lining up with the FDP and the opposition Social

Democrats (SPD) in favour of liberalisation.

The CDU, which persuaded the constitutional court 16 years ago to strike down a liberal abortion law passed by an SPD-led parliament, is deeply divided on the issue this time.

Outright opposition to abortion has been left largely to the CDU's staunchly Catholic sister party, the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU).

CSU members, citing official estimates that around 200,000 abortions are carried out in west Germany every year, believe doctors interpret the existing law too liberally.

Ursula Maennle, who chairs a CSU committee on abortion, says abortion can-

not simply be dropped from the criminal law.

"This is about human life being killed, and protection of life is prescribed by our constitution," she said. "The right to life is indivisible."

Supporters of more liberal laws use the same rhetoric about "protecting the unborn" but interpret the phrase differently.

Opposition SPD leader Hans-Jochen Vogel argues that the state should demonstrate its commitment to the unborn by speeding on measures that will make it easier for women to have their babies rather than abort them.

Referring to recent tax increases announced partly to finance Germany's contribution to the Gulf war, he said: "Anyone willing to raise taxes... to finance expenditure on a war must not hesitate... when it is a question of protecting the life of the unborn."

## Ray of fresh hope for victims of tropical diseases

By Dieter Döllken

HAMBURG

Hamburg's world-famous institute of tropical medicine, a ray of hope for millions of people suffering from tropical diseases all over the world, was founded 90 years ago. It will soon have completed a thorough reorganisation. Restructuring, begun in 1987, is aimed at boosting performance, opening up new research sectors and developing new vaccines to treat contagious diseases.

The Bernhard Nocht Institute of Tropical Medicine, named after a former Port of Hamburg chief surgeon, was founded in 1900 as a hospital for seamen suffering from tropical diseases. It went on to do research into tropical illnesses. It now has a 68-bed clinic and treats about 2,000 patients a year, one of three of whom are AIDS victims. It has a staff of about 300 and an annual budget of DM 28 million that is jointly financed by German health insurance schemes, the Federal government and the

Länder. It maintains a permanent overseas unit in Liberia. Its scientists have lately done research work in Tanzania too; their staff have probed possible cases of bubonic plague.

In future the Bernhard Nocht Institute will concentrate on basic research into tropical medicine, on clinical research on patients and on field research into epidemics. Another important sector will be training and further training of specialists in tropical medicine. There are plans to use advanced biotechnology in Third World countries. In this connection Hamburg's Health Senator Ortwin Runde recalls the vast extent of tasks facing tropical medicine. "Over half the world's 4.8 billion people run a risk of contracting malaria," he says. In the quest for effective vaccines the Hamburg institute is said in many cases to use "concentrated genetic engineering." It must, says clinic director Professor Müller-Eberhard, be given absolute priority — German Features.

## 'Kicking coffee habit produces drop in blood pressure'

By Paul Raeburn  
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Healthy men who drank three to six cups of coffee a day experienced a significant drop in blood pressure when they kicked the habit, researchers said Thursday.

The researchers think the drop might be larger in people with high blood pressure, who should be advised to give up coffee, said one of the study's authors, Dr. Robert Superko of Stanford University.

"Maybe this will help them prevent drug treatment" for high blood pressure, said the study's principal author, Jeff Mittleman of Stanford. "It's worth a try."

The findings were presented at the annual meeting of the American College of Cardiology.

The National Coffee Association said the drop in blood pressure was small and that other studies have shown no effect of coffee on blood pressure.

But Superko said the fall in blood pressure was significant, and that it varied among the subjects in the study.

"There are some people who went down profoundly," he said.

He said many of the previous studies that found no effect of coffee on blood pressure contained too few patients to demonstrate any

effect, and thus their findings should be discarded.

The new study was done with 120 healthy men with a median age of 45. They were given three to six cups of coffee a day for eight weeks, and then half of them were taken off coffee.

When researchers compared the coffee drinkers with the non-coffee drinkers, they found a difference of 5 points in systolic blood pressure — when the heart is pumping — and a difference of about 3 points in diastolic pressure — when the heart is relaxed between beats.

Blood pressure was measured with a device that patients wore, so readings could be recorded every half hour throughout the day, the researchers said.

This provides a more accurate assessment of the effect of coffee on blood pressure, they said. No difference in blood pressure was found when patients were measured in the conventional manner, Superko said.

The researchers said 56 per cent of Americans consume an average of 3.4 cups (.816 litres) of coffee per day.

"Coffee may be the most common dietary additive in the American diet," they said.

Superko was the author of a study reported in 1989 that found that drinking decaffeinated coffee raised the levels of harmful cholesterol in the bloodstream.

## Diamond drill opens clogged arteries

By Paul Raeburn  
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — A tiny diamond cutting tool spinning 200,000 times per minute successfully tunneled through deposits clogging arteries in 95 per cent of 315 patients tested.

"It has been an exceedingly useful device to treat blood vessels in a different way," said Dr. Maurice Buchbinder, a cardiologist at the University of California, San Diego.

Side effects were minimal, Buchbinder said in a report at the annual meeting of the

American College of Cardiology. About 6 per cent of the patients suffered heart attacks after the procedure, but most of those attacks were not the most severe type, he said.

There were no deaths and about two-thirds of the patients' arteries remained open six months after the procedure, he said.

Dr. Michel Bertrand of the University of Lille, who is collaborating with Buchbinder on studies of the device, reported that unclogged arteries closed abruptly in 4.5 per cent of the patients treated.

But in all cases the arteries were reopened, usually with an inflatable balloon threaded into the artery, he said.

Bertrand and Buchbinder are compiling data on patients being tested at 15 research hospitals in the United States and Europe, Buchbinder said.

Dr. William Untereker of the Philadelphia Heart Institute, an authority on the use of lasers to open blocked arteries, said it is too soon to know how the diamond-tipped device will compare with lasers or other devices in-

tended to scour the inside of arteries.

"A lot of this is theoretical," he said. "We think with the laser we're getting a clean cut. I would predict it would be a year or two before this is sorted out," he said.

He reported a 96 per cent success rate using a laser to open re-clogged blood vessels in patients who had previously undergone bypass surgery.

Buchbinder's device, called the Rotablator, is powered by compressed air that runs a turbine outside the body, turning a flexible shaft threaded through the artery.

The egg-shaped tip, covered with thousands of microscopic diamond chips, cuts hard materials such as the tough plaques that clog arteries but does not cut flexible tissue, such as the artery walls, Buchbinder said.

"It's very similar to the way a razor spares your skin while cutting the stubbles with the rotation," he said.

In about one-third of the patients, an inflatable balloon was used to further open arteries after the diamond tip cut away most of the blockage, Buchbinder said.

The cutting tool will not

replace the balloon, which is used routinely to open clogged arteries, he said.

But, "for lesions that are higher risk with the balloon, this may have particular advantages," he said.

Unlike the balloon, the Rotablator does not put stress on the artery walls, he said.

And when a balloon is used after the Rotablator, doctors can use much less pressure to squeeze remaining plaque against the sides of the artery, because the Rotablator has softened the plaque, Buchbinder said.

## Peru cholera outbreak latest outpost of worldwide epidemic

By Catherine Arnst  
Reuter

LONDON — The outbreak of cholera in Peru is the latest in Latin America this century — but only the latest stop for a worldwide epidemic that started 30 years ago.

Epidemiologists do not even consider the Peru epidemic, which has claimed almost 200 lives since it started in January, the most serious outbreak of the disease.

Zambia has suffered from a cholera epidemic since October that has killed more than 600 people, the World Health Organisation (WHO) reports.

"Why do other countries get less public attention than Peru," asked Dr. S. Simeant, a medical officer with WHO in Geneva. "Why is Peru considered especially bad when three times as many people have been killed in Zambia?"

There is no evidence that

the cholera bacteria in its present form existed in the world before 1800, scientists say, but since then there have been seven great outbreaks of the disease, called pandemics because they spread around the world.

All seven could be traced back to southeast Asia, where the cholera bacteria thrives in damp climates.

WHO said the current pandemic started in the early 1960s in Indonesia and spread through the rest of southeast Asia and all of Africa throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

It has killed more than 10,000 people.

Health officials had thought the current pandemic had been halted at the west coast of Africa, but Simeant said a traveller to Africa must have brought the bacteria back to Peru, where unsanitary conditions allowed it to spread.

Cholera is an infectious bacterial disease that can cause severe diarrhoea,

which if untreated can lead to dehydration and death. There is a cholera vaccine available but medical experts rarely recommend it because it offers very limited protection and does not last very long in the body.

The bacteria is primarily spread in faeces, and therefore scientists consider it an environmental disease beyond medical control. The bacteria, and the disease, thrives in areas lacking in sewage, clean water or sanitation.

Peru is infamous for poor hygiene, with raw sewage gushing into the ocean and rivers that are used for drinking water.

The cholera bacteria is not invariably dangerous. Some 80 per cent of the people infected have no symptoms at all, and about half those who do develop symptoms suffer from acute diarrhoea that passes in two to three days.

About one to three per cent develop very severe diarrhoea that can lead to

death, Simeant said. Those most at risk of dying from the disease are young children, the elderly and the malnourished.

But scientists say there is no reason anyone should die from the disease, because it can always be effectively treated by drinking fluids.

"The disease holds no fear for anyone with access to decent medical care," said Dr. Simon Van Heynintien, a biochemist at the University of Edinburgh who studies the bacteria.

Although there have been some limited outbreaks of the disease in industrialised nations, Van Heynintien said "the disease always disappears very quickly in advanced countries."

But in poor nations the disease can spread quickly, mainly through unclean water. The bacteria can also be concentrated in shellfish, which is why Peruvians are now giving up a favoured national dish, cebiche, made

from marinated raw fish. Peru's economy is also a victim of the disease because exports of food and fishmeal have virtually stopped, as other nations fear contamination.

But medical experts said the risk of cholera spreading to other countries through food imports is virtually nil. The bacteria only lives a few days and the average shipping time of most fresh food is 10 days.

Dried, canned or irradiated food will not contain any bacteria even if the original material was contaminated, and fresh fruits are safe if they are peeled or cooked before eating, as the bacteria lives on the surface of the food.

Even shellfish that is contaminated is safe if it is thoroughly cooked before eating, according to WHO.

Dried fish meal, one of Peru's biggest exports, is safe because it is dried, which kills the bacteria, and because it is fed to livestock, which cannot

become infected with cholera.

"WHO has no documented evidence of any cholera outbreak occurring as the result of the importation of food across international borders," the organisation said.

"In fact" cholera has been endemic for decades in many countries of Africa and Asia which continue to export food without the importing countries reporting cholera outbreak as a result."

WHO also said there was little point in imposing travel restrictions to or from cholera-afflicted areas because "the truth of the matter is that they just do not work."

"It is impossible to detect the bacteria in the 80 per cent of the people who develop no symptoms, so it would not be possible to isolate infected persons."

Travellers to an infected area do not risk developing the disease as long as they drink only bottled water and avoid eating uncooked foods, WHO said.

## Study suggests higher dosages to revive heart attack patients

By Herbert G. McCann  
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Higher Adrenaline doses for some heart attack victims would help the drug more effectively stimulate the heart without complications, two new studies say.

The first of two studies published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that the standard dose of the drug Epinephrine, commonly known as Adrenaline, is inadequate to revive patients who have been in cardiac arrest 15 minutes or more.

The second study found that increasing the dose of Epinephrine did not produce increased direct complications.

But one expert advised caution, saying that going

above the standard dosage could cause complications, including uncontrolled heart contractions, or heart fibrillation, a major cause of death in cardiac arrest cases.

"Epinephrine is a powerful drug," said Dr. James Walter, chief of the section of emergency medicine at the University of Chicago. "There is a concern high dosage could perhaps cause more of this lethal fibrillation, which makes it more difficult to shock (restart) the heart."

Heart-attack is the nation's no. 1 killer, with 511,050 deaths reported in 1988, the most recent year statistics are available.

The first study published in the *Journal* reviewed the standard dose of Epinephrine, which works like the natural hormone

Adrenaline by raising blood pressure and increasing heart beat.

When used to revive heart attack patients, Epinephrine helps stimulate the heart and increases the amount of blood flowing to the heart and brain.

That study found the Epinephrine dosage the American Heart Association has recommended since the 1960s is inadequate for cases of cardiac arrest lasting over 15 minutes. The standard Epinephrine dose is 0.5 milligram to 1 milligram administered every five minutes regardless of patient's weight.

The Heart Association, based in Dallas, said a spokesman was not immediately available to comment on the study.

Dr. Norman A. Paradis and nine other doctors at

Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit studied the drug's effect on 32 patients, with half receiving the standard dosage. The other half received a higher dose — 0.2 milligrams per kilogram of patient weight.

The doctors said that at the higher dose, an adult weighing 170 pounds would receive 14 milligrams of Epinephrine per dose.

Patients remaining in cardiac arrest after several 1-milligram doses received the higher dose, resulting in drastic blood pressure increases.

"Because coronary perfusion (blood) pressure is a good predictor of outcome in cardiac arrest, the increase after high-dose Epinephrine may improve rates of return of spontaneous circulation," the study said.

The study indicated that

after prolonged heart attack, Epinephrine doses of 0.2 milligrams per kilogram raise blood pressure more than the standard dose. It noted the standard dose may be effective when given within the first several minutes of cardiac arrest.

Paradis said the Heart Association's guideline was developed in the mid-1960s after research was conducted on dogs.

"What is surprising is that the dosage we were giving since the 1960s had little or no effect on blood pressure during cardiopulmonary resuscitation," Paradis said.

"If you can't raise the patient's blood pressure high enough, you have little chance of getting the patient's heart started."

In the second study, researchers found that increas-

ing the dose of Epinephrine did not produce increased direct complications.

That study used 68 adults, with about half receiving high doses of Epinephrine and half receiving the standard dose. It was conducted by Dr. Michael Callahan, Dr. Charles W. Barton and Dr. Steven Kayser at the University of California, San Francisco.

An accompanying editorial in the *Journal* also urged caution in using higher doses, noting that the Callahan study involved only 68 patients, limiting its statistical value.

The editorial also noted that the second study excluded patients who did not survive for at least six hours after treatment with Epinephrine, discounting lethal complications.



## Abu Sharif

(Continued from page 1)

basis for settling the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"It is unfortunate that these (Western) organisations are trying to distort our positions," Mr. Abu Sharif told Jordan Radio. "There is absolutely no truth in this news."

He said: "We have a copy of the interview and it does not include any... concessions at all," he said.

"What we said is that we expect the implementation of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 fully and that remains a main condition from the Palestinian people," he added.

Mr. Abu Sharif affirmed that the PLO remained supportive of a peace initiative announced by Mr. Arafat in 1988, announcing the organisation's acceptance to Resolutions 242 and 338.

Resolution 242 calls for an Israeli withdrawal from the territories it occupied in the 1967 war.

It also calls for the right of Israel to live within secure borders and at peace with its Arab neighbours. Resolution 338 calls for the implementation of 242.

Mr. Abu Sharif said Palestinian leaders who met with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in occupied Jerusalem had made clear "the PLO's continued representation of the Palestinian people and that there will not be alternative leadership."

The PLO leadership "pays homage to the way in which the Palestinian personalities carried out their mission," said a spokesman quoted by the Palestinian news agency Wafa.

The spokesman, providing the first PLO reaction to the encounter, said the Palestinians "made clearly understood to the American official the voice of the Palestinian people, attached to their inalienable national rights and to their leadership, the PLO."

The Palestinians presented Mr. Baker with a petition that called for international support for their goal of independence, suggesting bilateral efforts could not succeed because of Israeli unwillingness to compromise.

The petition also emphasised that the PLO was the "sole, legitimate leadership" of the Palestinians.

"This position... crushed all attempts aimed at putting into question the representation of the organisation or to bypass it," Wafa quoted the spokesman as saying.

Sky News and the British Broadcasting Corporation had reported earlier Wednesday that Mr. Abu Sharif had in an interview outlined a new PLO stance.

The new initiative would include acceptance of a Palestinian state containing territory less than the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the reports said. They also said Mr. Abu Sharif had indicated a willingness to drop its demand to negotiate with Israel as an equal partner.

Sky News said Abu Sharif would formally announce the new initiative at a news conference in London Thursday. It said he had outlined four key points:

— The PLO would drop its demand to be treated as an equal partner in negotiations with the Israelis. Palestinians nominated by the PLO but no members of the organisation would do the talking.

— They would accept something less than the complete West Bank and Gaza Strip for their Palestinian state, compromising with the Israelis on where the borders would lie.

— The state would be demilitarised for a transitional period. During this time the United Nations would be responsible for security.

— It would not automatically be a PLO state headed by Mr. Arafat. The Palestinian people

would hold democratic elections to decide their government.

"They can choose their own representatives and no one can designate for them the Palestinians who represent them. It's their free choice," Sky News quoted Mr. Abu Sharif as saying.

Speaking on BBC radio, Mr. Abu Sharif said Palestine representatives would negotiate the borders of a Palestinian state, which the PLO says should include a corridor through Israel between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

"We will be ready to discuss demilitarisation of the region as a whole, or any kind of guarantees that will ensure the safety and security not only of the Palestinian state but also of the Israeli state," Mr. Abu Sharif told the BBC.

He said Arafat Jerusalem could be the capital of the State of Palestine.

In occupied Jerusalem Avi Pazner, spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, said: "We have no interest in what the PLO is saying or doing. They are out of the picture."

Reiterating Israel's rejection of talks with the organisation, he said Mr. Abu Sharif's reported comments were an attempt to obscure the PLO's support for Iraq in the Gulf war against a U.S.-led coalition of Western and Arab states.

"We don't believe the PLO. We don't trust anything the PLO says," Mr. Pazner said.

## Baker

(Continued from page 1)

neighbours at which Palestinians also would be represented. The reports said the Soviet Union might be one of the sponsors of the meeting.

The conference would be a smaller scale version of the international conference proposed earlier by Western countries, Israeli newspapers said.

Mr. Baker's visit overlapped with a visit by British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg to Syria.

British embassy sources said Mr. Hogg was spending the day in the historic town of Palmyra, some 250 kilometres northeast of Damascus, and that he was not scheduled to hold any meetings with Syrian officials Wednesday.

Mr. Baker will visit Turkey Saturday for talks with President Turgut Ozal on post-war developments in the Gulf, the Turkish foreign ministry said.

## Allies

(Continued from page 1)

It said the bodies, contained in stainless steel military shipping caskets, were taken to a U.S. army mortuary at the Dhahran air base where preliminary identification would be carried out.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) did not list the nationalities of the 14 bodies. But U.S. officials in Washington said earlier that one was reported to be that of a U.S. navy flier shot down over Iraq, and five others were British.

## Moscow

(Continued from page 1)

view with interest Mr. Baker's views on the timing of the summit. "It could be in spring, for instance in May," TASS quoted Mr. Ignatenko as saying.

A U.S. embassy spokesman said he could not confirm the date.

An Israeli foreign ministry spokesman said meanwhile the ministry's director-general, Reuven Merhav, was due to leave later in the day for Moscow to discuss the Middle East and bilateral issues with Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh and other leaders.

## Reaction

(Continued from page 1)

comprising the PLO, such as the Popular and Democratic fronts for the liberation of Palestine.

However, only that point in particular, giving up land and accepting less than all of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, created any controversy among official circles.

Sources said they believed that by dropping its demand to be treated as an equal partner in negotiations with Israel the PLO was actually reviving the idea of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

If asked officially by the organisation to do so, Jordan would probably accept such a role, although it would continue to impress that Jordan is not acting as a representative for the Palestinians but a partner in efforts to solve the 24-year old problem (see His Majesty King Hussein's statement to the New York Times on this issue on this page).

The sources commented that Europe would not reject the proposals and the United States might find in them an opportunity to bend to international calls for a peace conference dealing with the Middle East. In fact some of the sources said they believed that American intransigence against Palestinian representation may actually be a pressure mechanism to reach this end.

Other proposals initially included in the reports of Mr. Abu Sharif's interview with Sky News TV included calls for demilitarising the projected Palestinian state at least for a transitional period during which the United Nations would be responsible for security and holding democratic elections in which Palestinians would choose their leaders as well as their government.

The Jordanians opined that these two stipulations might have been called for by the citizens of the occupied territories through their leaders and PLO acceptance of these terms comes in compliance with the Palestinian people's wishes.

# While the militaries devour the funds, children wither of hunger

By Nur Sati

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Dwight Eisenhower, the World War II hero turned U.S. president, once said: "For every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed." President Eisenhower had the American people in mind when he said this. Today his words seem so applicable to the world at large.

The gap between First World "technology" and Third World "needs" has become so wide that it promises no peaceful coexistence between the two. While the cost of the Gulf war alone totalled an estimated \$80 billion until Feb. 17, UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund in a study conducted during 1990, estimates that the cost of achieving health, education, water and sanitation as well as nutrition goals worldwide would add up to \$22.4 billion each year. That would be a fourth of the cost of the war, the \$80 billion spent on operation "Desert Shield" and "Desert Storm." In other words the cost of the war would cover the above needs

for three and a half years worldwide. According to UNICEF's report, Children and Development in the 1990s, "\$100 billion every year is devoted to military research. This large sum of money if redirected to studies benefiting children, health, medicine, environment and economic development," would guarantee humane conditions for all peoples.

Throughout the world, millions of children suffer from malnutrition, hunger and poverty. Everyday, 40,000 children below the age of five die because of diarrhoea, acute respiratory infection, measles and tetanus. Moreover, nearly three million children die each year because of diseases that could be easily prevented through immunisation. The annual cost of immunising 80 per cent of these infants is the equivalent to the cost of two B-52 Stealth bombers, which cost the United States \$600 million each to produce.

Nutrition, a fundamental right and need for children to grow up into healthy productive adults is being neglected, causing underweight births, higher risk of diseases, starvation and death. In the developing world, excluding China, 150 million children are underweight. More than 20 million children are severely underweight and about 20 million infants are born weighing below 2.5 kilograms. UNICEF estimates the cost of nourishing these children at about \$7 million a year, not even the cost of one Apache helicopter (\$11.7 million).

Thirty per cent (1.2 billion people) of the world's population in developing countries lack access to safe drinking water. Forty three per cent (1.7 billion) of the people lack access to appropriate sanitation. According to UNICEF, "communities pay exceptionally high prices in terms of physical health and social well-being for the lack of access to such vital resources as water and sanitation. Many diarrhoeal diseases are water borne." UNICEF adds, "women and girls, the principal carriers of water in most cultures, have to walk long distances, sometimes up to five kilometres, to fetch water that may or may not be safe. The effort expends calories these women can ill afford, and leaves them with less time and energy to care for their children, to participate in social activities and to meet other responsibilities."

"Of the order of \$35 billion

will be needed during the 1990s if total coverage of water and sanitation is to be achieved by the year 2000," UNICEF maintains — meaning the cost of rebuilding Kuwait would cover these financial needs for six years (Time magazine estimated the rebuilding of Kuwait would cost \$200 billion over the next decade).

At the moment, and a result of the Gulf war, the Iraqi people are on the list of most deprived nations. Iraqi population has no access to safe drinking water or proper sanitation. A very high risk of epidemics spreading throughout the country and maybe into the entire region exists, UNICEF's regional director, Richard Reid, said recently after visiting Baghdad. "Diarrhoeal diseases are already four times their normal rate," a joint UNICEF-WHO report stated at the end of a joint mission in Iraq early this month. Children, as always, will be the first victims: 77,000 are below the age of one and two million between the ages of one and three in a population of 18 million Iraqis. "If sanctions on Iraq remain, reversing the country's prestigious health records will be extremely costly," one expert commented.

mented.

What about basic education?

One out of two children in developing countries do not enjoy full primary education. One hundred million primary school age children do not attend school and one third drop out before completing the fourth grade. One of the results of no access to schooling is a working child. These children are exposed to jobs that are morally or psychologically damaging, hours that are excessive and conditions unsafe. UNICEF's report says. In Colombia, for example, less than 6.2 per cent of child brickworkers have completed primary school. In Egypt, many children must work to afford primary school. Only half of the Egyptian child leather workers (70 per cent of whom work more than eight hours a day) were attending school. In India, 37.5 per cent of the workforce in carpet industries were children. A joint UNICEF-UNESCO study found that it costs \$5 billion a year to ensure primary education for the deprived in 72 low income and middle income countries, just a fraction of the Gulf war's cost.

The Gulf war, like any other war, brought destruction and unnecessary waste at all levels.

"Children are in especially difficult circumstances and the most vulnerable," according to UNICEF. Some 50 million children worldwide live in the streets and another 20 million are refugees. Twenty two million people died in 127 armed conflicts and four million children are physically disabled while 10 million are psychologically traumatised. UNICEF's report says.

"International agreements to develop portions of the earth and devote the returns to improving the needs of human beings, would be a worthy use of funds liberated by reduced spending on armaments and war," UNICEF's report suggests. It advocates that money invested in the arms industry be spent on more productive and needed projects.

One medical doctor who read the UNICEF report asked: "Where did all the money suddenly come out from when governments have been asked over and again to invest in such areas as medical research for cancer and AIDS which is now the leading cause of death amongst women between the age of 15 and 45 in the United States, Europe and Africa?"

## King

(Continued from page 1)

The King declined to endorse any specific peace proposal. Any serious approach had to be considered, he stressed. But, he insisted, any solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict had to be based on the return of occupied territory by Israel for peace with the Arabs, a principle endorsed by the United Nations and by President Bush in a recent speech, but rejected by Israel's government.

King Hussein also expressed some scepticism of Mr. Baker's suggestion that Middle East peace be tackled by solving Israel's conflict with Arab states, on the one hand, and resolving the Palestinian-Israeli problem on the other. "You can't resolve one without the other," the King said.

## Prince

(Continued from page 1)

Jordan is important for stability, then clearly we have to open direct consultations again."

The Crown Prince commented on the present splits among the Arab states by saying: "Differences within the Arab World during the Gulf crisis fall into three categories: One over the chronology of events, what happened before the second of August and beyond, and this is academic; two over suspected motives of Arab countries, and three over differences in perspective over the future."

"The future is an issue on which we clearly have to meet and to talk responsibly and directly sooner or later. I assure you that these differences were not pro or anti-American. I think the people of this region have seen the military face of the United States and top technology and now we have to see once again human rights and democracy of self-determination."

The Crown Prince stressed that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) should be given a key role in any settlement of the

Arab-Israeli conflict because the Palestine problem is the crux of the issue and there can be no way of reaching a settlement without involving the Palestinian people through their legitimate representatives.

## Masri

(Continued from page 1)

conference as the "most suitable framework."

"We welcome this American commitment and consider it a positive step on the road to solving the Palestinian problem and applying international legitimacy and an important step towards reaching a just, durable and comprehensive solution in the region," Mr. Masri said.

The foreign minister directly criticised the U.S. for following a double track policy in its handling of the Israeli occupation of Arab and Palestinian lands compared to its quick action to put an end to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and stressed that this American policy has received backing from Israel.

He also spoke about Jordanian concern that many European, Arab and other countries in the world have joined ranks with the U.S. and the Jewish state in their policies. "Allow me to point out that the American voice at this time, in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, has become an internationally effective voice," Mr. Masri said.

He expressed concern that countries which have publicly upheld a clear position towards the Palestine issue may adopt a different position through their regional groupings or in private.

"Through our meetings in Amman and elsewhere we have felt that official positions of countries may differ from those of the groupings they are affiliated with or are different from how they act in practice," He cited France as a country whose individual position differs from the European Community of which it is a member. In light of all the changes grip-

ping the region, Mr. Masri expressed Jordan's belief that it "is necessary to deal with the Palestine issue quickly to prevent new factors which may have impacts on fast developments."

In the four page written statement outlining Jordan's foreign policy in the post-Gulf war era, Mr. Masri stressed the foundations upon which Jordan will continue to base its policies towards regional developments.

Stressing that Jordan has an important and active role in the region the foreign minister said that the Kingdom will continue to deal with this role in "a positive, clear and committed manner."

"Jordan will continue in fulfilling its duty towards its most paramount concern which is the Palestinian problem and will deal with its Arab brethren in all honour, sincerity and openness."

Jordan, the minister said, will continue to work towards the implementation of Resolution 242 and 338 "in the same resolve manifested by the international community towards the Gulf crisis."

Mr. Masri rejected entertaining the idea of Jordan becoming an alternative to the PLO as representative of the Palestinian people in any peace negotiations and stressed the need for "Palestinian people's participation in the solution of their problem."

"Jordan will not be an alternative to the PLO," Mr. Masri stressed.

He expressed surprise at the double standards shown by the U.S.-led alliance, formulated after the Aug. 2 Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, in adopting and implementing U.N. resolutions in one case but not in the other.

"The U.S. and countries allied with it in the Gulf crisis repeatedly refused to meet with the concerned parties in direct negotiations and insisted on working through the Security Council and on applying international legitimacy first," Mr. Masri pointed out.

However, the same countries "now refuse to follow the same pattern towards the Palestinian problem and insist on holding direct negotiations between concerned parties first."

Summing up Jordan's policy, Mr. Masri said that any regional security order or regional cooperation has to be derived from the Middle East region itself. "It should not be through axis groupings."

He called on the Arab leaders to "nurture their wounds, close their ranks and learn from the mistakes of the past, all the time looking forward to building a better future for our nation."

"Whatever the accusations may be between the Arab sides, and however hard the divisions or high the emotions may be they will not be deep enough to prevent us from building a common Arab effort and constructing a new Arab order based on the will of the Arab people and their aims with the goal of liberating the Arab will and renovating the nationalistic frame."

During Wednesday's session of the Lower House, deputies were divided over the American statement on the Palestinian problem. The 22-member Muslim Brotherhood rejected President Bush's statement as deception and renewed its call for the liberation of all of Palestine.

But a dozen other independent deputies hailed the call and said they supported Jordan's belief that an international peace conference provided the best venue for settling the conflict.

## Revolt

(Continued from page 1)

in Basra and Kirkuk.

An opposition Kurdistan front spokesman said in Damascus that Iraqi loyalist forces had blown up two oil wells in Kirkuk Wednesday. He gave no further details, but analysts said the government may want to deprive the rebellious north of oil revenue. Bekker Fattah, spokesman for

the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, told IRNA that pitched battles were raging in Kirkuk and that the army had launched a full-scale assault on Khanaqin, 120 kilometres northeast of Baghdad.

Kurdish rebels were reported to have stormed the main Badush jail in Mosul, Iraq's third largest city, and set all prisoners free.

A spokesman for the Democratic Party of Kurdistan claimed in Paris rebels had taken the town of Akra, north of Mosul, and controlled 75 per cent of Iraq's northern Kurdistan region.

IRNA said several big explosions rocked Basra, Iraq's second city. It quoted a Basra citizen who crossed into Iran as saying the rebels were trying to drive loyalist forces out of the city.

The Iraqi government newspaper Al Jumhuriya said "traitors" engaged in a rebellion against President Saddam were doomed to failure and accused the United States of seeking to fragment Iraq (see page 2).

Turkey made no promises to rebel Iraqi Kurds during secret talks in Ankara last week, a foreign ministry spokesman said.

"There have been no promises made or commitments entered into in the talks with Kurdish leaders," ministry spokesman Murat Sungur told reporters.

He said Friday's meeting between Ministry Under-Secretary Tugay Ozceri-Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), and an envoy of Massoud Barzani's Iran-based Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) was "purely unofficial."

Sources said the apparent unity at the three-day Beirut conference's end overlaid major differences on how to overthrow President Saddam, and what should replace him.

"Our people's main mission is to overthrow Saddam Hussein's dictatorship," the opposition factions said in a declaration that concluded their three-day conference in Beirut.

The statement said that after toppling President Saddam, the

opposition would form a "transitional coalition government representing all opposition forces."

It promised that the government "would abolish all forms of political, nationalist, sectarian and religious discrimination and install democratic changes based on political plurality."

Such democratic reforms were defined as "freedom of political practices, freedom of the press, freedom of religious practices and freedom of organising strikes and demonstrations."

The declaration pledged that the transitional government would hold "free and direct general elections of a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution for the nation."

The conferees also agreed on forming a special fund to pay for the uprising, but did not say who would finance it.

However, the declaration said Iraqi opposition leaders would visit Arab and other foreign capitals to muster support for the revolt.

In tacit admission of the differences among the Shiite, Kurdish, Communist, Liberal and Arab nationalist resistance groups, the declaration called for "bolstering solidarity between the various opposition groups to achieve the goal of unifying the Iraqi opposition."

Once such coordination is achieved, another conference is planned, but no date was given.

Conference sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, cited sharp differences between the various factions.

"These differences also prevented the conferees from forming a parliament-in-exile and a government-in-exile," one conference source said.

The Shites have in the past favoured an Islamic Republic patterned after Iran's. The Kurds have fought for decades for autonomy, while the communists and Arab nationalists favour a democratic secular federation which keeps Iraq unified and represents all its ethnic and religious communities.

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## Canadians lead in pairs event of World Figure Skating Championships

MUNICH, Germany (AP) — Canadians Isabelle Brasseur and Lloyd Eisler can hold their heads high.

Especially when Eisler tosses Brasseur into the air with her head almost 15 feet (4.5 metres) in the air.

The Canadian couple enters the final long programme after taking the lead in the original programme, which counts for one-third of the score. Brasseur and Eisler, runners-up last year, surprised the favoured Soviets in the pairs event.

To a sassy routine set to Ain't She Sweet, they scored marks mostly in the 5.6 to 5.8 range. That gave them a slight lead over Natasha Mishkutuk and Artur Dmitriev, the European champions. Another Soviet pair, Elena Petrova and Denis Bechke, were third.

Americans Natasha Kuchiki and Todd Sand were fourth, with Calla Urbanski and Rocky Marval ninth.

Eisler and Brasseur finished second in 1990 to four-time world and 1988 Olympic champions Ekaterina Gordeeva and Sergei Grinkov, who have since turned pro.

"We are competing against ourselves now," Eisler said. "We weren't prepared for that. We wanted to see how we do against Gordeeva and Grinkov."

The highlight of the Canadians

short routine was a split double twist where Eisler tosses his partner high in the air, then lowers his arms before catching her.

"I guess she must be 12 to 15 feet above the ice," Eisler said. "With my arms down it gives the illusion that she is higher."

"I wouldn't go that high," he added.

Eisler is confident they can capture the gold medal.

"We have a far more difficult programme than the other couples," Eisler said. "With our long programme, we know we don't have to be perfect to know we have skated well."

In the men's event American Paul Wylie skates first in the portion of the competition that counts for one-third of the total score.

There are 33 skaters after him in the 2-minute, 40-second routine where a skater is required to do eight required moves. The other top contenders are bunched between 15th and 21st.

Kurt Browning of Canada begins his battle to defend his title in the 17th slot. His main rival, Soviet and European champion Viktor Petrenko, is two positions ahead of him.

Todd Eldredge, the American champion, starts 19th with Chris Bowman, the 1989 American finalist, scheduled to be the 21st skater on the ice.

The Soviets were in the top

position in the ice dance event after the compulsory dances, which count for 20 per cent of the total score.

Maia Usova and Alexander Zhulin scored a perfect 6.0 to help them take the lead over Marina Klimova and Sergei Ponomarenko after the Ravensburger waltz and the rhumba.

In third place were Isabelle and Paul Duchesnay of France.

The next phase of the ice dance competition is Thursday, the original dance to a blues rhythm. The final free dance is Friday, which counts for half of the total score.

Usova and Zhulin were convincing winners on each of the two dances. In the rhumba, the Soviet judge gave them a 6.0 while other judges scored them in the 5.8 range, with a 5.6 given by the French judge.

The International Skating Union (ISU) president said Tuesday that the need for saving money led to a drug controversy that threatened the eligibility of a Soviet world champion.

Olaf Paulsen said the laboratory in Sofia, Bulgaria, which handled the drug testing during the European Figure Skating Championships was not accredited by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The lab gave an initial positive test on Marina Klimova's urine sample which suggested illegal

steroid use. A second test at an IOC-approved laboratory in Cologne, Germany was negative.

Klimova and husband-partner Sergei Ponomarenko won the European ice dance title for the third time in Sofia in January. If the second test had been positive, she would have been suspended and lost her title.

Paulsen said they were requested by the organising committee of the European Championships to allow the local lab to handle the testing.

"We decided on a laboratory for testing the doping samples which was not accredited by the IOC. We wanted to save the organising committee money. We thought we could do it," Paulsen said.

But after the first test, Klimova's results became known, Paulsen regretted the way it was handled.

"No results of the first analysis should have been made public," Paulsen said. "No names at all."

Paulsen said that they are still searching how the information was prematurely released, "but we have learned from that experience."

"We shall only give doping samples for analysis to laboratories officially recognised. The other labs simply don't have the necessary technical equipment for such research," Paulsen said.

## Gullit accepts Milan's dominant era ending

MILANELLO, Italy, (R) — As AC Milan's hopes of a third successive European Cup triumph hang by a thread, their inspirational Dutch international Ruud Gullit accepted that the world's best teams stay at the top for more than three or four years.

In a week when Milan were held 1-1 at home by Marseille in the European Cup and coach Arrigo Sacchi ruled them out of the Italian title race after losing to Sampdoria, Gullit implied that their reign may be coming to an end.

"It's difficult to stay at the top. Habit sets in. (From) the second season it's difficult because they all want to beat you," Gullit said.

"If (in the second season) you win something they look at you and say: They're very good," he said in an interview at Milan's training camp.

"Big teams stay at the top for three, four years, then they slip below the top level, look for players and slowly, slowly go back to the top," he said.

AC Milan won the league in 1988 and the European Cup and World Club Championship twice, in 1989 and 1990.

Gullit pointed to Real Madrid, Spanish champions for the past five seasons but about to be dethroned, as a major European club currently hitting a bad cyclical patch.

Gullit said that what divided the best team in the world from the rest was always getting a good result.

"If you play badly, you (still) win," he said.

This season Milan had played badly several times in the league but were left off the hook.

"By luck or less attention of some players, we had the opportunity to get a draw," he said. "Against big teams that never happens. One-nil is one-nil, over and out."

Milan have had a bad week. They took the lead against Marseille in the first leg of their European Cup quarter-final but allowed the French champions to equalise — the first goal they have conceded at home in over two years of European competition.

Their apparent decline was further confirmed with a 2-0 league defeat by Sampdoria four days later, leaving them three points off the pace.

After that game coach Sacchi said: "We've been the best side for a long time. At the moment, we're just not there anymore."

Gullit said that after a defensive World Cup teams at all levels were attacking and pressing more.

land in December, could be sidelined again because of a calf injury. Juventus midfielder Thomas Haessler is struggling to overcome a knee injury.

Vogts' main concern is to find a long-term replacement for Bayern Munich libero Klaus Augenthaler who quit international soccer after the World Cup.

Vogts refused to say whether he would use Roma's Thomas Berthold or Eintracht Frankfurt's Manfred Binz as sweeper against the Soviets.

Vogts, whose squad includes seven players based in Italy, named VfB Stuttgart midfielder Matthias Sammer and striker Thomas Doll from the former East Germany.

Frankfurt (R) — Coach Bert Vogts included 14 members of Germany's World Cup winning squad in his party of 20 for the soccer friendly against the Soviet Union in Frankfurt on March 27.

The match is a warm-up for Germany's European Championship qualifiers against Belgium on May 1 and Wales on June 5. The World Champions opened their Group 5 campaign with a disappointing 3-2 win over Luxembourg in October.

"If possible we want to play the same team that will take on the difficult task of Belgium," Vogts said when announcing his squad Wednesday.

But Inter Milan defender Andreas Brehme, who missed Germany's 4-0 win over Switzerland

## Tyson does not expect much of a fight from Ruddock

LAS VEGAS (R) — Donovan "Razor" Ruddock is supposed to be Mike Tyson's toughest test since he lost the world heavyweight championship 13 months ago but Tyson himself doesn't expect much of a challenge in their bout next Monday.

"I'm not looking for any great competitive fight," says Tyson. "Don't be surprised if I stiff (knock out) Ruddock in one round."

That would rudely relegate Ruddock to the same journeyman class as Henry Tillman and Alex Stewart, first-round victims of Tyson in his only fights since he lost his crown to James "Buster" Douglas in February 1990.

Of course, Ruddock disputes Tyson's assessment. "I don't think anyone can beat me," the 27-year-old Jamaican says.

Las Vegas oddsmakers agree with Tyson, making him a 5-3/4-to-one favourite.

The World Boxing Council, World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation all rate Tyson higher, ranking him the number one contender and Ruddock number two.

Tyson, 24, has a record of 30-1 with 35 victories in the distance.

Ruddock, who is on a 16-fight winning streak that began in 1985, is 25-1-1 with 18 victories

inside the distance.

Like Tyson, Ruddock can brag of stopping his last opponent in the first round but Mike Rouse, his victim last Dec. 8, was no more illustrious an opponent than Tyson's.

Ruddock's most impressive victories were against Michael Dokes, whom he stopped in the fourth round last April, and James "Bonecrusher" Smith, whom he stopped in the seventh in July 1989.

Ruddock also will boast a considerable size advantage in the ring Monday night but Tyson is used to cutting bigger opponents down to size.

And Ruddock, whose left hook is his best weapon, has never inspired the elemental fear that

"iron Mike" has since the then 20-year-old in 1986 became the youngest man to win a world heavyweight title.

The winner of the Tyson-Ruddock bout is being billed as the next opponent of the victor of the fight between world heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield and former champion George Foreman on April 19 in Atlantic City.

But it may not turn out that way.

If Foreman deposes Holyfield, he may then face Ray Mercer, postponing any title bout with Tyson or Ruddock until next spring. In that case the Tyson-Ruddock winner would almost certainly have a non-title fight before then.

## Fifa considers abolishing extra time

ZURICH, Switzerland (AP) — FIFA will discuss a proposal to abolish extra time and immediately initiate penalty kicks to determine World Cup games tied after 90 minutes, a published report said Wednesday.

FIFA General Secretary Joseph Blatter, quoted in the Swiss newspaper Sport, said the idea is on the agenda of a May 3 meeting of FIFA's World Cup Organising Committee.

Another proposal is for the championship match to be replayed if the first game is tied after regular time, FIFA spokesman Guido Tognoni said.

Usually, a World Cup final tied after 90 minutes is decided by the usual two, 15-minute periods of added time and, if necessary, a shootout.

FIFA has been criticised for the all-time low of 2.11 goals-per-game average at the 1990 World Cup in Italy, and has said it is considering other rule changes.

Media reporters were highly critical of the World Cup, especially the final, where Germany beat Argentina 1-0 on a late penalty kick in a game that some called the most boring championship match in the history of the event.

## Vogts plays safe with squad facing Soviets

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land in December, could be sidelined again because of a calf injury. Juventus midfielder Thomas Haessler is struggling to overcome a knee injury.

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## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY MARCH 14, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

**GENERAL TENDENCIES:** Today's complete lack of aspects isn't likely to stimulate you into any kind of sudden activity that would prove discordant to your interest but be on the look-out for the erratic acts of others.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Your deepest desires and yearnings have a good chance of being realised by contacting useful allies and getting them to help you to obtain them.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) This is the time to get busy at those money making or solving problems that are facing you for you can attend to them with far more benefit.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) You now can see pretty clearly what to do in order to get the things you want the most that are of a personal and intimate nature to you.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) This is the time to make sure that you do show you can keep a secret well guarded as some confidence is given you that must not be mentioned.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Now you are able to join in the social spheres that have similar interests to your own and you can get the backing you need for some project.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Whatever you find to be the means by which to please those who have any power over your affairs is fine since they are willing to help you a lot.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Now you are able to make some big progress by some new

interests that have been absent in your life for sometime and that requires your own openmindedness.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Your mind is quick and alert now to see what others expect of you and if you carry through with their wants in detailed manner you will succeed.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Do nothing that can upset others who expect you to do a good job but work with consistency and efficiency and you will have supporters.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Your task awaits your most talented expression so give it your best if you want to have conditions favourable for you in the days ahead.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) This is the time for you to think out what creative expressions and pleasures please you the most and then take the necessary steps.

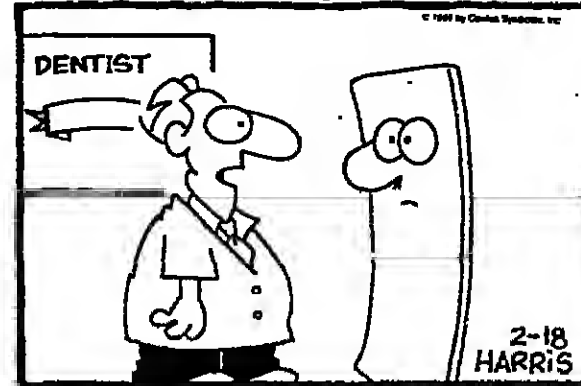
**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) You have some definite ideas what is needed at your own dwelling to bring more long-time happiness and harmony there so put things in motion.

Today's child: If your child were born today he or she will want everything in life to be perfect and will always lack understanding of why that posture isn't possible. Being well endowed with executive ability this child will be accused of being bossy because of their desire to have things their own way.

"The stars impel, they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you.

## THE BETTER HALF.

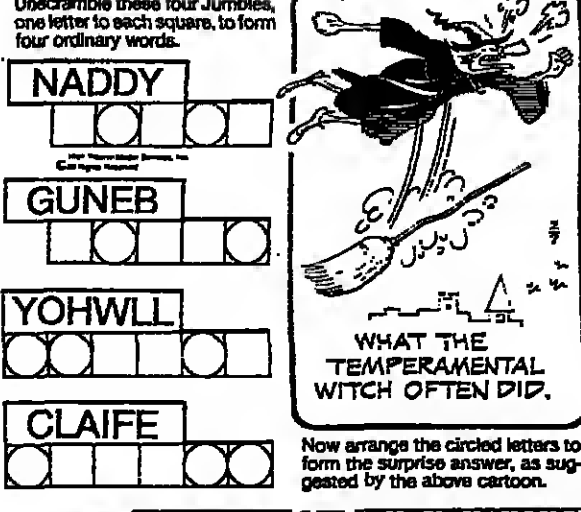
By Harris



"You've got gum disease, Stanley."

## JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



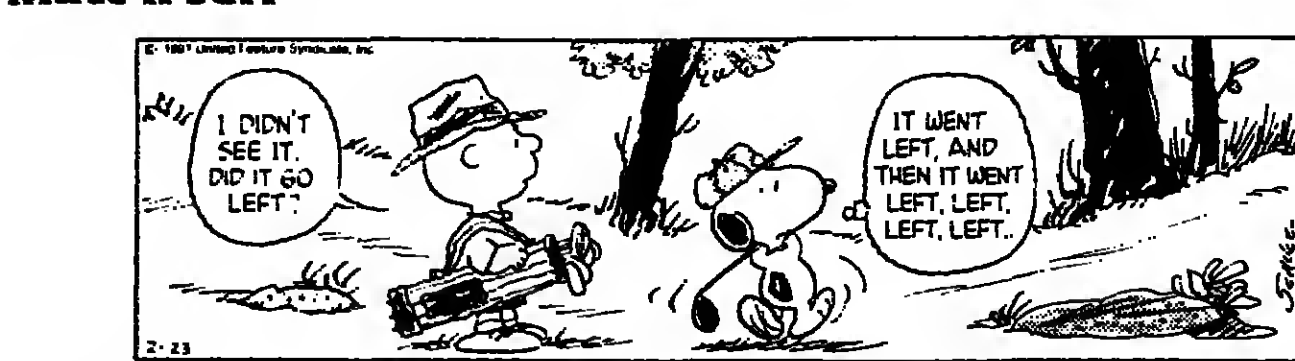
Yesterday's Jumbles: TRAIT IDIOM BURLAP ENMITY  
Answer: The letter O is the noisiest of vowels, because all the others are in "AUDIBLE" (audible).

## THE Daily Crossword



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:  
ACROSS: 1. Computer term, 4. Saxon, 9. Frolic, 14. Actress Hagen, 15. More unusual, 16. Art's contents, 17. Chronicle: abbr., 18. Like a dreamer, 20. Interrogated, 22. Decline, 23. Mil. people, 24. Recent, 25. Skeletal part, 27. Rajah's mate, 28. Work by Chopin, 30. Island, 31. Orphanages, 32. — Moines, 33. Alliance letters, 35. Grouches, 36. Well-known, 38. Ignominy, 40. U.K. part, 41. Use a shuttle, 44. Squall, 45. Quagga, 46. Cuerno or, 48. Andreotti, 49. Cafeteria item, 50. Likewise, 51. Timetable, 52. Tree, 53. Of a Eur. river, 56. Leave in a hurry, 59. Overly, 60. Particulars, 61. Cut, 62. — Town, 63. Portume, 64. Ceremonially, 65. Wrongs, 66. Map abbr., 67. Down, 1. Broke the law, 2. State again, 3. Roman, 4. Outlying, 42. Ventilates, 43. Ship, 44. Unchanging, 45. Nigh, 47. East, 49. Rugged peak, 52. Facilitate, 54. Favor, 55. Goes wrong, 56. Letters, 57. Question word.

## Mutt'n'Jeff



## Andy Capp



## Peanuts



## GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH  
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## WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:  
♠ J7652 ♠ Q105432 ♠ Void ♠ 87  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North 1 ♠ South West  
Pass 1 ♠  
What action do you take?

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ K8 ♠ KQ10653 ♠ K95 ♠ 83  
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ K8 ♠ KQ10653 ♠ K95 ♠ 83  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 NT Pass 3 ♠ Pass  
What action do you take?

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ K8 ♠ KQ10653 ♠ K95 ♠ 83  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 NT Pass 3 ♠ Pass  
What action do you take?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ 9 ♠ Q73 ♠ A8K6 ♠ Q762  
What is your opening bid?

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ 9 ♠ Q73 ♠ K945 ♠ AQJ62  
What is your opening bid?

Q.7—NT Pass ?  
What action do you take?

Q.8—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ K8 ♠ KQ10653 ♠ K95 ♠ 83  
The bidding has proceeded:  
North East South West  
1 NT Pass 3 ♠ Pass  
What action do you take?

Q.9—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ 9 ♠ Q73 ♠ A8K6 ♠ Q762  
What is your opening bid?

Q.10—As South, vulnerable, you hold:  
♠ 9 ♠ Q73 ♠ K945 ♠ AQJ62  
What is your opening bid?



## U.S. current account deficit hits lowest level since 1984

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. trade deficit with the rest of the world in goods, services and tourism shrank in 1990 to its lowest level in six years, the Commerce Department said Tuesday.

As foreign sales picked up and earnings on overseas investments grew, the current account deficit — the broadest measure of the nation's trade performance — fell to \$99.3 billion last year, the department said.

Dropping below the \$100 billion mark for the first time in six years, it was the lowest shortfall since \$99.0 billion in 1984 and contrasted with a peak deficit of \$162.3 billion in 1987.

The deficit in 1989 was \$110 billion.

The merchandise trade deficit was lower than in 1989, while surpluses on overseas services like banking and transportation grew.

The deficit on merchandise trade for all of 1990 fell to \$108.7 billion in 1990 from \$114.9 billion in 1989. The surplus on services increased to \$22.9 billion from \$20.5 billion.

Notably, the United States had a net surplus of \$7.5 billion on investments last year, compared with a deficit in 1989 of \$913 million.

The Commerce Department also said the U.S. dollar depreci-

ated 15 per cent in 1990 against the currencies of 10 industrial nations, making U.S.-made goods cheaper for foreigners to buy.

Despite the strong full-year improvement, the deficit grew in the final three months of last year and has the highest of any 1990 quarter, largely due to events leading up to the war with Iraq.

The fourth-quarter deficit was \$27.8 billion, up from \$26.5 billion in the third quarter. The merchandise trade deficit fell, but the United States granted Egypt \$7.1 billion in debt forgiveness and Israel was granted \$2.9 billion under a regular congressional appropriation.

## Diamond sparkles in Belgium, glimmers less for De Beers

LONDON (Agencies) — The Gulf war hit the world's diamond industry hard, the chairman of the De Beers diamond empire said Tuesday, as he announced a 16 per cent drop in the company's 1990 profit.

The Middle East crisis not only dampened diamond sales, but disrupted the diamond market by discouraging professional buyers from travelling to buy gems, said Chairman Julian Ogilvie Thompson.

"The whole market was upset," said Ogilvie Thompson, who spoke to reporters through a telephone back-up from Cape Town, South Africa.

He said the war was particularly disruptive to the important diamond cutting centre in Israel. Most buyers refused to travel to that country because it was under attack by Saudi missiles from Iraq.

Antwerp, Belgium, another major cutting centre also saw a drop in buyers during December and January, said Roger Van Eeghen, a De Beers spokesman in London.

But Israel continued to cut diamonds, and polished stones were sent to Antwerp for sale, Van Eeghen said. Customers also showed up for De Beers' sales of rough diamonds in London, he said.

Eighty per cent of the world's rough diamonds are carried from mines to London, where De Beers sells them through its Central Selling Organisation. Buyers then carry the diamonds to the major cutting centres. From there, the polished gems are dispersed to jewelry makers and retail outlets around the world.

De Beers said its net income for the year ended Dec. 31 came to \$950 million, or \$2.50 per share, compared with \$1.127 billion, or \$2.96 per share, in 1989.

The company, which is made up of the Swiss-based international company De Beers Centenary, A.G. and South Africa's De

Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd., previously announced that diamond sales edged up two per cent to \$4.17 billion in 1990 from \$4.09 billion in 1989.

Ogilvie Thompson said the second half of 1990 was hurt not only by the Middle East crisis, but also by slower economic growth around the world. He noted the slowdown in the U.S. economy, which is the world's biggest diamond market in terms of carats sold.

He declined to make forecasts for the rest of 1991, saying the market was "particularly difficult to read" even though the war was over.

However, he said he was encouraged by the recent healthy performances on world stock exchanges because historically such rallies have been followed by upturns in the diamond industry.

In Belgium, Mark Van Den Abeelen, director-general of the Antwerp-based Diamond High Council, told a news conference that Belgium's diamond business, the world's biggest, sparked last year despite a lull after the start of the Gulf crisis. "All in all it was a pretty good year despite a slight change for the worse in the last quarter for reasons you all know," he said.

He said its turnover of rough, polished and industrial diamonds increased by six per cent in 1990 to \$15.54 billion. Imports of gems rose seven per cent to \$7.76 billion while exports grew five per cent to \$7.76 billion.

Van Den Abeelen said there were hopeful signs that 1991 would be as successful as 1990, mainly because the Gulf war had been short and would have only a limited impact.

He said Antwerp had 54 per cent of the world's diamond trade. It distributes more than 85 per cent of world output of rough diamonds and half of all polished diamonds.

## Iran plans to raise \$10b by mid-year

LONDON (R) — Iran hopes to raise about \$10 billion by the middle of the year as part of a massive five-year plan to liberalise its economy, an Iranian central bank official said Tuesday.

Ali Manavi Rad, assistant to Iran's central bank executive board, said the \$10 billion was the first stage of a bank debt and harter scheme to raise a total of \$27.4 billion.

"We have already received firm proposals, commitments and pledges for something like \$9.5 billion and we hope all these financial agreements will be concluded by the middle of summer," Manavi Rad said at a business conference in London.

Iran expects to spend \$120 billion under a five-year plan running to 1993, Manavi Rad said. Of this, \$27.4 billion would come "in the form of different lines of credit from abroad," he said.

The Islamic republic would fund the balance from foreign exchange earnings through oil and non-oil exports.

About \$17 billion would be as direct bank debt, but some \$10 billion would come through barter deals in which foreign companies took Iranian goods as payment for equipment supplies.

These transactions, called buybacks, would help Iranian industry and save foreign exchange, said Manavi Rad.

Some foreign suppliers had already entered negotiations with Iran for various buyback projects. Mehdi Navab, deputy minister for economic affairs and finance, said Iran had \$2 billion in short term debt, but only \$250 million of long term debt.

Iran, whose economic liberalisation aims include large-scale privatisation, wants foreign companies with financial facilities and technical skills to bid for projects and as joint venture partners.

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## Japan sends \$8.6b to Gulf aid fund

TOKYO (R) — Japan transferred the equivalent of \$8.6 billion to its Gulf Peace Fund Wednesday, fulfilling its pledge of aid for the U.S.-led Gulf force, the government's spokesman said.

Chief spokesman Misoji Sakamoto made no mention of the fact that the yen-based donation fell short of the \$9 billion Japan pledged after the start of the Gulf war in January.

Japan calculated its \$9 billion Gulf contribution based on the 130-yen rate for the dollar on Feb. 28, when parliament's lower house approved a supplementary budget to fund the pledge.

The upper house passed the Gulf aid package one week ago, paying the way for Japan to deliver.

Since the end of the Gulf war, however, the dollar has climbed in value, trading at about 136 yen Wednesday.

Sakamoto said the committee of six Arab nations that manages Japan's Gulf Peace Fund will decide how to allocate the money

but added it would not go toward the cost of weapons.

"The committee will soon decide (on how the funds are paid out) after taking into consideration requests from the (allied) countries," Sakamoto told reporters.

"But it will adhere to our government's request that (the funds) only go toward non-military costs like transportation, food and medicine."

U.S. treasury officials have indicated they expect to receive all the Japanese funds and have included the figure of \$9 billion in a provisional budget to pay for the Gulf war.

Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu told parliament recently that most of Japan's contribution would go to the United States.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd also asked Japan last week for a share of the money. Britain's was the second largest non-Arab contingent in the coalition forces which drove Iraq from Kuwait.

## New Maghreb bank plans \$0.5b capital

TUNIS (R) — A foreign trade bank planned by the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) will have capital of half a billion dollars shared equally between the five member states, officials said in Tunis Wednesday. Creation of the Maghreb Investment and Foreign Trade Bank was approved Monday at a summit meeting of AMU members Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. The bank will fund joint agricultural and industrial projects, encourage movement of capital and develop trade between AMU states to create an integrated Maghreb economy. It will have a branch in each country but the location of the head office has not yet been decided. The agreement creating the bank stipulates that a quarter of the capital must be paid in immediately after ratification of the agreement.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES			
Wednesday, March 13, 1991			
	Buy	Sell	Forward (3 months)
U.S. dollar	670.0	674.0	489.7
Pound Sterling	1245.2	1252.7	371.6
Deutsche Mark	425.7	428.3	115.5
Swiss franc	491.4	494.3	57.1
			207.1

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.			
One Sterling	1.8593/03	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1534/39	Canadian dollar	
	1.5705/12	Deutschmarks	
	1.7685/95	Dutch guilders	
	1.3643/52	Swiss francs	
	32.35/39	Belgian francs	
	5.3500/50	French francs	
	1172/1173	Italian lire	
	136.50/60	Japanese yen	
	5.8000/50	Swedish crowns	
	6.1425/75	Norwegian crowns	
	6.0360/10	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	365.05/365.55	U.S. dollars	

## Dollar edges higher in Europe, shares fall

LONDON (R) — The dollar edged higher in Europe Wednesday, but a threat of fresh central bank intervention seemed enough to keep it from resuming its recent rally, dealers said.

European share markets took a breather after a series of advances and gold bullion rose on the coat-tails of a surge in silver and platinum prices.

The prices of crude oil were also higher following a decision by OPEC Tuesday night to make a modest production cut.

A statement by U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan predicting America's recession would be shallow and short-lived, coupled with a rise in retail sales for the first time in four months, combined to help lift the dollar.

The dollar closed in Europe at 1.5800 marks and 136.55 yen, compared with Tuesday's close of 1.5715 marks and 136.40 yen.

"Traders have been nervous about central bank interven-

tion," but there has still been some corporate business coming through," said Robin Aspinall, currency economist at J. Henry Schroder Wagg and Co. in London.

"If it weren't for the central banks the market would still be looking to buy dollars," he added.

European central banks, led by Germany's Bundesbank, made concerted attacks on the dollar in the first two days of the week, and dealers said they expected further intervention if the U.S. currency resumed its steep rise.

Greenspan Wednesday confirmed to the Joint Economic Committee of Congress that the Fed eased credit last Friday and said he expected an economic recovery later this year.

The U.S. central bank chief said the current recession may prove milder than most, adding he saw a pickup in demand in the coming months.

## U.K. lifts restrictions on Kuwaiti assets

LONDON (R) — Britain said Wednesday it had ended a freeze on Kuwaiti assets imposed after Iraq's invasion of the emirate last August but it kept in place restrictions on Iraqi assets.

British Treasury officials said the freeze, put in place to protect Kuwait's assets from the Iraqis, was lifted at the start of the day.

Kuwait is a major force in the London financial markets through various investment groups, including the Kuwait Investment Office.

Expatriate Kuwaiti fund managers have operated under various restrictions that have allowed them to protect their holdings while remaining mostly inactive.

Bankers say Kuwait's external assets may be worth up to \$100 billion although much lower figures of about half that amount are also frequently cited.

The investments are expected by bankers to be used as security for loans that will be needed to rebuild the country.

"It should be beneficial to the sterling market given the help we have given the Kuwaitis during the war... Britain should benefit as much as anybody," said Adrian Cunningham, economic adviser at Bank of America in London.

By using its unfrozen holdings as leverage for borrowing, Kuwait would be able to benefit from its investment income and keep the portfolio of holding itself largely intact.

## Reuters launches business report

LONDON (R) — Reuters, the world news and information organisation, Wednesday launched the Reuters business report (RBR), a new service primarily for the media in Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

The RBR is a fast and comprehensive service produced in English by a team of editors in London drawing on Reuters worldwide reporting resources.

"Reuters provides comprehensive coverage of all main business markets for its specialist subscribers," said Mark Wood, Reuters editor-in-chief.

"The launch of the business report offers the best of that reporting to our media subscribers in a service written with the general reader, listener or viewer in mind," he noted.

The RBR covers business, finance, economic trends, trade, markets, companies and commodities for broadcasters and newspapers in the European time zone. Similar services are already available in Asia and the United States.

The new service will be delivered by satellite broadcast to small dish receivers or via dedicated lines.

Pre-tax profits of Reuters Holding PLC rose last year by just over 13 per cent despite difficult condition in its key markets.

Reuters profit rose to £320.1 million (\$639.9 million) in 1990 from £283.1 million (\$566 million) the previous year.

Revenue was £1.37 billion (\$2.74 billion) compared with £1.19 billion (\$2.38 billion) in 1989.

The company said vigorous growth in the first half of the year was partly offset in the second by difficult markets, a stronger pound and higher expenses, including £11.1 million (\$21 million) for cost-cutting programmes.

While the profit matched share analysts' expectations, the company said a lower level of net new orders would make achieving double digit profit growth in 1991 increasingly difficult.

The company had "very heavy turn-of-the-year cancellations as clients trimmed their costs ahead

of 1991," managing director and chief executive Glen Renfrew said in a statement.

The company's shares came under pressure in recent months as key customers, particularly leading banks, were experiencing downturns.

Reflecting those pressures, Reuters tempered its earnings outlook from one made two months ago when it said it would be "reasonably satisfied to achieve double-digit growth in pre-tax profits in 1991."

In giving the revised outlook, Renfrew said that net new orders had since picked up again but were still well below last year's average.

"Reuters underlying strengths remain intact, including a strong market position, wide geographical spread and diversification across market sectors."

### TODAY AT

Cinema **RAINBOW** Tel: 625155

**KICK BOXER**

Show: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema **CONCORD** Tel: 677420

**Johnny Hand Some**

3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel: 634144

**BROOKE SHIELDS (...) IN KING OF THE GYPSIES**

Performances: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30

Cinema **NIJOM** Tel: 675571

**THE PUNISHER**

Performances: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30  
Friday & Sunday extra show at 12:00 a.m.

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel: 699238

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Show: 12:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30 p.m.

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### ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE WATER AUTHORITY OF JORDAN

#### INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

BIDS NO. 07/91/HP, 08/91/SP, 09/91/W

- The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has received a loan from Kreditanstalt Fuer Wiederaufbau (KfW) in Deutsche Marks towards the Water Sector Programme and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract(s) for which this IFB has been issued.
- The Water Authority now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following tenders:-

No. of Tender	Supply of	Nonrefundable Fee in J.D.	Performance Security in J.D.
1) 07/91/HP	Horizontal Pumps & Spare Parts	100.—	6,000.—
2) 08/91/SP	Submersible Pumps & Spare Parts	150.—	10,000.—
3) 09/91/W	Welding Machines	75.—	3,000.—

- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect the bidding documents at, the office of the Secretary General, Tenders Division, Water Authority, P.O.Box 2412 Amman, Jordan, Tel. 06-680100, Tlx. 22439 WAJ JO, FAX 679143.
- A complete set of the tender documents may be purchased by any interested eligible bidder on the submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee as mentioned in item 2 above.
- All bids must be accompanied by a security as mentioned in item 2 above and must be delivered to the office not later than 1200 hours, Jordan local time, on Tuesday May 7, 1991

Eng. Mutazz Belbela  
Secretary General  
Water Authority



## President dissolves parliament; India to hold elections in May

NEW DELHI (AP) — India's president dissolved parliament Wednesday to clear the way for elections in May, ending a week of uncertainty that followed the resignation of Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar.

President Ramaswamy Venkataraman announced the dissolution of parliament just 18 months after the last national election, which left no single party with a parliamentary majority. Both governments formed since then have been weak and short-lived, headed by parties in a minority.

Convened in December 1989, the ninth parliament was the briefest in India's history. In his announcement dissolving the Lok Sabha, the powerful lower house of parliament, Venkataraman said a new parliament should be installed by June 5. That would indicate that elections in the world's largest democracy would be scheduled for late May.

Chandra Shekhar will remain in office as head of an interim government until a new government is formed. It was up to Venkataraman to decide whether to order elections or give one party a chance to form a minority government. The presidency usually is a ceremonial post which assumes political power only at times of turmoil.

Chandra Shekhar announced his resignation in parliament on

March 6, complaining that he was being manipulated by former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party, whose support was essential for his minority government.

Chandra Shekhar's Janata Dal-Socialist Party controlled only 54 of the 514 deputies in the Lok Sabha, depending on support from the 211 Congress Party legislators for a parliamentary majority.

Gandhi was accused of dictating policy to the prime minister over the last two months in what was seen as a naked display of the Congress Party's power over the weak government.

Chandra Shekhar balked over what he said was Congress' repeated interference, including pressure last month to stop U.S. military planes from refueling in India on their way to the Gulf. Gandhi declined an opportunity to step into the vacated prime minister's office when backstage mediation failed to patch up differences with Chandra Shekhar.

Gandhi telephoned Venkataraman earlier Wednesday affirming his support for an early election, a Congress Party spokesman said. "We put our trust in the people," Gandhi told reporters in parliament, welcoming the decision for an election. "We have been calling for it from the day the prime minister resigned. I am

sure the Congress will come back in a strong majority."

Chandra Shekhar left on a previously scheduled trip to Patna, the capital of the eastern state of Bihar, shortly before the dissolution announcement was published.

Commentators said Gandhi overplayed his hand when Congress deputies boycotted parliament for two days last week in protest over alleged police surveillance of his home. Chandra Shekhar then announced his resignation.

Elections were seen as a last resort which no party wanted and which could result in widespread campaign violence, with little change in the political landscape. Venkataraman delayed his decision on whether to hold new elections, allowing attempts to form a new coalition government to play themselves out, and until parliament passed an interim budget to allow the government to function for the next four months.

On Monday and Tuesday the legislature rushed through a series of financial bills as well as measures allowing federal rule to continue in the states of Punjab and Assam, where separatist insurrections are raging. Chandra Shekhar became prime minister on Nov. 10 after

the collapse of the National Front Coalition led by V.P. Singh. That 11-month-old government disintegrated in internal disputes under the pressure of religious and caste riots.

Chandra Shekhar, a 62-year-old politician who had held no previous government office, led a walkout from Singh's Janata Dal Party. He formed his own Janata Dal-Socialist Party and won Congress' backing for a minority government.

The upcoming elections for the 514-seat Lok Sabha, or House of the People, primarily will be a four-way contest between Gandhi, Chandra Shekhar, Singh and his leftist allies, and Lal Krishna Advani who heads the right-wing Hindu fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

Thirty seats in the current parliament are vacant because of delayed elections, deaths, resignations and expulsions.

The Congress Party, which has governed India for all but five of its 43 years of independence, seems likely to emerge again as the largest party, but not necessarily with a parliamentary majority.

Gandhi, who took over the party after his mother Indira Gandhi was assassinated in 1984, was prime minister for five years.

## Serbian continue peaceful protest

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Thousands of anti-Communist demonstrators continued a peaceful protest in Belgrade Wednesday after Yugoslav leaders failed to agree on how to restore law and order in Serbia.

Five days of anti-Communist protests have gripped Serbia. Tens of thousands of people, mostly students, protested Tuesday against the brutal police crackdown on demonstrators Saturday, in which two people died and about 120 were injured.

The headline Marxist leaders of Serbia, the country's largest republic, have been at odds with more liberal, independence-minded republics such as Slovenia and Croatia.

Serbian authorities gave in to several of the protesters' demands Tuesday, including the release of the republic's foremost opposition leader, Vuk Draskovic, who detained during Saturday's disturbances.

Draskovic, the leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement, immediately joined the demonstrators in downtown Belgrade, which is the capital of Yugoslavia and of Serbia.

He urged a cheering crowd of about 50,000 to continue demonstrations until Serbia's government collapses.

After Draskovic spoke, the rally's organizers declared it over, claiming the government had bowed to all their demands except the removal of Serbia's Interior Minister Radomir Bogdanovic, whom the opposition holds responsible for Saturday's crackdown.

That apparently was not enough for up to 3,000 students who maintained an all-night vigil on Terazije Square. They are demanding the sacking of all those responsible for Saturday's bloodshed, including senior police officers.

They also called on Belgrade citizens to attend Wednesday's funeral of a 17-year-old boy killed by police Saturday. The other person killed was a police officer.

Belgrade University students have announced they will strike until the minister resigns.

The challenge to Serbia's government has brought to a head the political and ethnic strife pulling apart this fractious nation of six republics and two provinces. Serbia is the most populous republic.

The 24 million residents of Yugoslavia's various republics are being tugged at by pro-Western forces advocating more freedom in northern Croatia and Slovenia and by Communist authorities seeking to maintain their rule in Belgrade.

Until now, Serbia's hardline president, Slobodan Milosevic, claimed popular support in his republic with efforts to keep together the centralized federation.

Slovenia and Croatia, where centre-right governments replaced Communists last year, seek a loose alliance of sovereign states and have threatened to secede unless their demands are met.

## Yeltsin seeks TV time to state view on unity

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian Federation President Boris N. Yeltsin said Wednesday he requested time on national television to state his views before Sunday's referendum on preserving the union, and was awaiting a response.

Yeltsin has frequently tangled with the state broadcasting monopoly in his campaign against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and has accused it of denying him access to the airwaves.

"In case of a negative answer, I will consider it as one more step in curbing glasnost in the USSR," Yeltsin said, as quoted by the independent Postfactum News Agency.

"I will be on the air — by a more complicated, more difficult way — but it will be so," he warned, without elaborating. "I will say my word before the referendum."

Yeltsin rejected Gorbachev's recent warnings that widespread anti-government demonstrations could topple the Kremlin administration and lead to civil war.

"We do not have the social circumstances for a civil war," Yeltsin said. "We will not face a civil war because there are no

antagonistic contradictions between social groups, between workers, peasants and intellectuals, between people and the army."

The anti-Communist opposition has staged a series of street demonstrations in Moscow this year, with participants increasingly calling for Gorbachev's resignation.

Pro-Yeltsin rallies were held in at least 23 Russian cities Sunday. Up to 500,000 people massed near the Kremlin in the largest anti-government demonstration in Moscow since the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

Yeltsin said the Kremlin can order troops to areas of ethnic and political tensions, "but the army as a whole will never turn against the people."

"Any changes, including dismantling of the administrative system, will follow the peaceful constitutional way without bloodshed," he said.

Powerful bomb blast kills U.S. sergeant in Athens

ATHENS (R) — A powerful bomb blast has killed an American Air Force sergeant in an Athens suburb and police said the attack bore the hallmarks of the left-wing November 17 urban guerrilla group.

Police identified the dead man as Sergeant Ronald Stewart, 35, who had worked at the U.S. Hellenikon Air Force Base south of Athens for the past five years. He lost both legs when a remote-controlled bomb exploded as he walked to his home in the sea-side suburb of Glyfada, south of Athens. He was rushed to hospital but doctors said he bled to death.

November 17, a militant Marxist-Leninist group, has killed 15 Greeks and Americans since 1975. The group shot dead Pavlos Bakoyannis, the son-in-law of conservative Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis, in September 1989.

It has waged a bomb and rocket campaign against U.S., French and British targets since Jan. 17

after the election in the popular uprising that propelled Mrs. Aquino to power. The chairman of Namfrel, Jose Concepcion, was subsequently appointed secretary of trade and industry.

The study claims 2 million fictitious voters added by Marcos to the voting rolls were purged from the rolls but secretly restored in time for the May 1987 congressional voting.

During the 1987 election, Filipinos were allowed to vote for up to 24 senators and one house candidate. Twenty-two-Aquino candidates were elected to the Senate along with two from the opposition.

The study said Namfrel's figures indicated that 2 million more votes were cast in the nationwide Senate races than for all the ballots submitted for district house races.

"To assume that people will be more interested to vote for Senators than for their representatives goes against the voting behavior of the Filipino electorate," Prof. Tancango said.

Although Namfrel's figures were unofficial, they were widely cited in the press at the time because its count was quicker. At the time, Namfrel's totals were also generally perceived as accurate and non-partisan.

The study alleged that election officials were pressured to tailor their official count to tally with Namfrel's figures.

Such charges were raised in 1987 by the opposition but were widely rejected as partisan.

Police said the remote-controlled bomb and the large amount of explosives, which wrecked several cars and caused extensive damage to Stewart's house, were clear signatures of the November 17 group.

November 17 last killed an American on June 28, 1988 when it used a remote-controlled car bomb to kill U.S. navy attaché William Nordeen, 51, as he drove to work.

The group has struck with impunity in the streets of Athens since 1975, when it made its first hit — assassinating U.S. Central Intelligence Agency station chief Richard Welch. He was shot dead at close range.

The group often denounces "American imperialism" and takes its name from the day in 1973 when the then-ruling military junta crushed a student uprising at the Athens Polytechnic School.

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## World War II bomb detonated

CRETEIL, France (AP) — Construction workers Tuesday found a 400-kilogram (880-pound) World War II bomb, and experts safely detonated it, police said.

The bomb, two metres long, was uncovered by workers on a construction site in Villeneuve-Saint-Georges in the Val de Marne region east of Paris. Police sealed off the area, evacuating about 60 people, cutting traffic on a road through the area and rerouting planes landing at Orly Airport, south of Paris, to a more distant runway at the airport. Experts then safely detonated the bomb without causing an explosion, police said.

## Forgetful policeman loses \$80,000 in cash

DES PLAINES, Illinois (R) — Police in this Chicago suburb are conducting what so far has been a fruitless search for \$80,000 lost by an embarrassed undercover officer. The unnamed veteran of the suburban police department was on his way to make a purchase from a narcotics dealer 10 days ago when he left a canvas bag filled with marked \$50 and \$100 bills on the roof of his car and drove off. The officer passed a lie-detector test

## Irish gambler settles U.K. bills

CHELTONHAM, England (R) — A big-time Irish gambler paid £1 million (\$1.86 million) to be at Cheltenham races Tuesday — and then won an estimated £3 million (\$5.6 million) on his wife's horse. Gambler Noel Furlong paid British customs officials a total of one million pounds to settle a tax dispute dating from 1985 and have a warrant for his arrest in Britain withdrawn. His wife's horse, 6-1 shot Destiengo, then won the first race at the three-day Cheltenham Festival. Betting industry sources estimated that Furlong, who placed his bets in Ireland before travelling to Cheltenham, won £3 million on Destiengo's victory. They said he could have picked up £10 million (\$18.6 million) if another of his wife's horses, the Illiad, had won the day's big race, the champion hurdle.

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## Albania pardons political prisoners

VIENNA (R) — Communist Albania, slowly emerging from decades of isolation, has pardoned all remaining political prisoners and is to restore diplomatic relations with Washington Friday after a 52-year rift.

A brief statement carried by the Albanian News Agency (ATA) Tuesday said Foreign Minister Muhamet Kapllani would sign a formal renewal of diplomatic ties in Washington on March 15.

A later report on state radio said the authorities had also agreed to pardon all remaining political prisoners.

"Following this pardon, there are no more political prisoners in re-education centres and prisons

in Albania," the radio announced.

The declaration of the amnesty did not say how many people would be released. Some 500 political detainees have already been pardoned since last December.

Earlier Tuesday a report from the International Helsinki Federation (IHF) human rights monitoring group said there were about 200 political prisoners in Albania's jails, including some whose only crime was to try to emigrate.

Despite President Ramiz Alia's attempts to rebuild foreign relations, his tentative domestic reforms have not been enough to stem an exodus by 20,000 Albanians to Italy in the last two

weeks.

Hundreds more have attempted to leave the country in recent days via Yugoslavia or by trying to obtain entry visas for Western countries.

A statement from the Interior Ministry Tuesday evening denied rumours that foreign embassies in Tirana would be open to would-be refugees Friday and warned that police would clamp down on anyone who tried to enter by force.

The IHF report, released in Vienna, said IHF delegates had investigated several incidents in which protesters died during a series of anti-government disturbances since December.

## Witness says he was beaten by Winnie Mandela

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — A second key witness testified Wednesday that he was slapped and punched by an enraged Winnie Mandela to force him to confess that he had homosexual relations with a white church minister.

Tabiso Mono, speaking through an interpreter, said he was badly beaten by Mrs. Mandela and her followers in December 1988 after being taken away from a church home with three other young men.

"She hit me with her open hands and fists on my face," Mono testified as Mrs. Mandela's trial on kidnapping and assault charges continued.

Asked by the prosecution to give details, Mono told of being beaten with a whip, being kicked and punched, and being picked up and dropped on the floor.

"I was assaulted. I was lifted into the air and left to drop down ... they were trampling on my body," he said.

Mrs. Mandela and three co-defendants have been charged with kidnapping and assault in connection with the alleged December 1988 attack on Mono, Kenneth Kgase and Gabriel Mokgwe. A fourth youth, Stompie Seipei, was later killed and Mrs. Mandela's chief bodyguard, Jorri Richardson, was convicted for his slaying.

Mokgwe, who was also to testify, disappeared just as the trial began last month.

MANILA (AP) — Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos Wednesday said he will announce within 60 days whether he will seek the presidency in the 1992 national elections.

Ramos made the statement following a speech with a group of aviation experts meeting in Manila.

The former armed forces chief said he decided to delay the announcement of his plans because of concerns over the effects of the Gulf war on the Philippine economy.

Ramos, a West Point graduate, added he will make his announcement once the fate of the thousands of Filipino workers stranded in the Middle East during the war is clear.

Asked when he will make his announcement, he said within 45 to 60 days.

"If you do it early, it may be premature and may lead to a miscarriage," Ramos told reporters. "If it's too late, even a Caesarian operation may not help you."

Several Manila newspapers Wednesday said Ramos was encouraged to seek the country's top post following his good showing in nationwide survey done by close friends and independent surveys.

"I am greatly encouraged by a comprehensive nationwide survey of political opinion that good friends recently commissioned which indicates that my candidacy might be fruitful," Ramos said in a keynote speech during a

## Franco-U.S. summit to set seal on new foreign policy accord

LE FRANCOIS, Martinique (R) — France and the United States are hoping to mend fences under the palms of Martinique Thursday, reconciled after years of friction by a common view of peace prospects in the Middle East.

President George Bush and Francois Mitterrand are due to meet on an old sugar plantation on this French Caribbean island, to discuss what both believe may be unique opportunity to end 40 years of Arab-Israeli conflict.

"Our positions are closer than they've ever been," Mitterrand's

spokesman declared this week. "There is a synergy in our diplomacy."

"I believe President Bush is conscious of the historic opportunity before us," French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said. "We will do everything to help him."

To observers of Franco-American relations, their comments marked a historic shift. France was long viewed in the U.S. as the source of knee-jerk resistance to almost any American foreign policy initiative. In Paris, Washington's di-

plomacy in the Middle East was seen as distressingly ignorant, unbalanced and insensitive.

Since the 1967 Middle East war, they had pursued diverging courses, the U.S. looking out for Israel's future, France building influence in what it foresaw as the modern Arab Nation.

But the success of the Gulf war alliance and the popularity both presidents enjoy as a result prompted a break with the past.

France believes Bush, unlike his predecessor Ronald Reagan, has proved himself ready to take political risks.

## Race for Tokyo governorship begins

TOKYO (AP) — Take an octogenarian, a TV executive, a pro-wrestler, a former stewardess who is a Harvard University fellow and two fiery leftist scholars. Put them all together and what do you get?

Japan's hottest gubernatorial campaign. The race for governor of Tokyo has already sparked a rebellion within the governing Liberal Democratic Party and has deeply embarrassed the nation's top opposition group. And there's still three weeks left.

The public seems to love it. According to Kyodo News Service poll, 82.9 per cent of Tokyo's voters are interested in election, and nearly 70 per cent plan to vote April 7.

At stake is one of the nation's most important elected offices. The governor, who is not called mayor because of Tokyo's special legal status, is responsible for an 11-trillion-yen (\$84.6-billion) budget — more than that of China or India. Tokyo is home to roughly one-tenth of Japan's 123 million population and employs 203,000 city workers.

Topping the list of candidates is incumbent Shunichi Suzuki, 80, an ex-bureaucrat in his 12th year as governor who is running for an unprecedented fourth term. "I've been involved in local government for 50 years. It's my life," said Suzuki, an independent. "I really hope that after my next term I will have a suitable person to hand the job over to."

Close behind Suzuki in the polls is Hisanori Isomura, who recently left his job as chief news editor with the public Japan Broadcasting Corp., or NHK.

The national leadership of Japan's three main moderate and conservative parties — the Liberal Democrats, the Clean Government Party (Komeito) and the

Democratic Socialist Party — decided to back Isomura instead of Suzuki.

Komeito, which is backed by a Buddhist sect, was the first to drop Suzuki for Isomura, saying the incumbent was too old. The Liberal Democrats quickly followed, and in the bargain won Komeito's support for a \$9-billion package of aid to the allied Gulf forces.

Komeito's approval was vital to win parliamentary support for the Gulf funding bill and thereby avert a potential disaster for Japanese diplomacy.

To the surprise of party power-brokers, who receive almost unquestioning obedience in their ranks, the Suzuki machine managed to hold on to the Tokyo chapters of both the Liberal Democratic and Democratic Socialist Parties.

The "Tokyo rebellion" could seriously effect the fortunes of some top national politicians if Isomura loses.

Several other candidates have been drawn into the high-profile campaign, including professional wrestler Kanji "Antonio" Inoki, who was elected to the upper house of parliament on the Peace Through Sports Party ticket.

His reason for running was a personal grudge from the days when Isomura, as an NHK anchorman, said Inoki's highly publicised "battlo royal" against Muhammad Ali in 1976 was "a farce."

Inoki, however, decided to pull out of the campaign. "I'm sorry about that," Isomura said Tuesday. "I'm a big fan of pro-wrestling."

Inoki, by the way, wrestled Ali to a draw.

Still in the running are: Political science Professor Mitsunori Ohara, who won the support of the nation's largest

opposition party, the Socialists, after half a dozen better-known prospects refused to run. The Socialists at one point announced they had given up searching.

— Shigeo Hatada, an international politics scholar, supported by the Communist Party.

— Makiko Hamada, a former Japan Airlines stewardess who is taking a break from research at Harvard to campaign.

Here's how they line up, according to their detractors: Suzuki is too old, and has been in office too long. Isomura is too inexperienced and smiles too much. Hamada's husband is already a member of parliament and one politician per household is enough. Ohara was not even his own party's first, second or third choice. Hatada's a Communist, and they never win the big ones.

Here are the issues: Tokyo suffers sky-high land prices and a perennial shortage of affordable housing. Top syndicates say they will build more.

There's a mega-yon waterfront construction project — involving several foreign companies — that Suzuki has championed, and that the opposition hopes to lance. But looming far larger is Suzuki's latest gift to the capital — the world's tallest city hall.

"City hall is the best symbol of Tokyo's excessive spending," Isomura said. "This kind of extravagance is unforgivable."

A marvel of marble, the sparkling city hall, which towers 213 metres above the capital and will house 13,000 municipal workers, opens on April 1.

Suzuki denies charges of excessive opulence, but acknowledges that the bad publicity has stained his image as a shrewd fiscal manager. So, he says, he won't move into city hall until he is re-elected.